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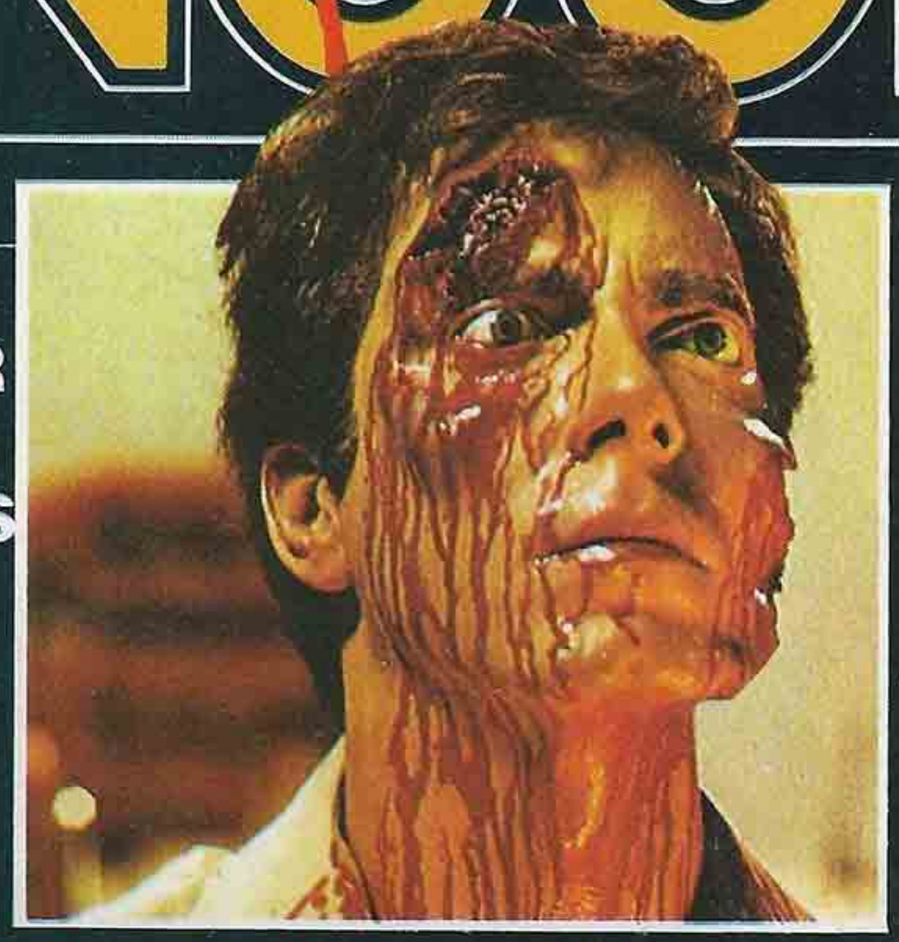

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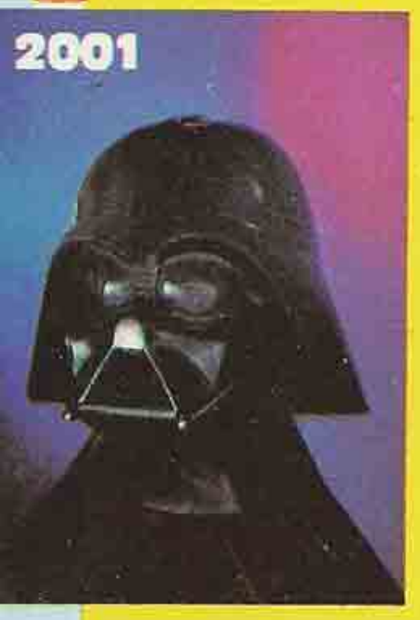

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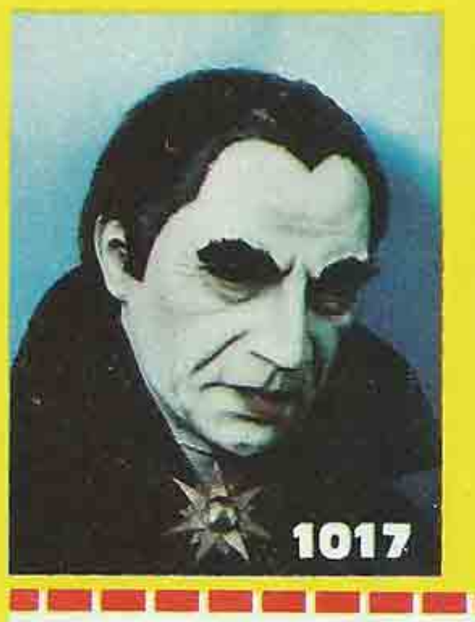

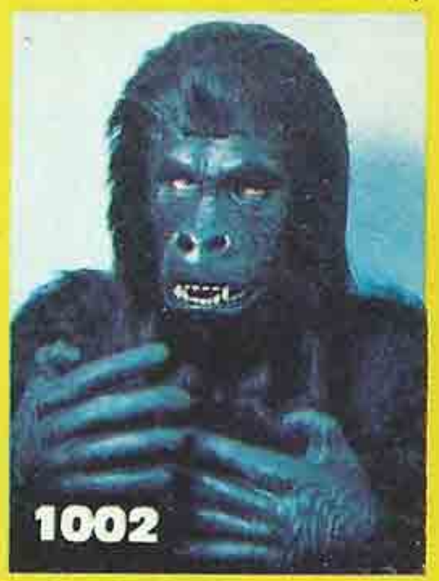

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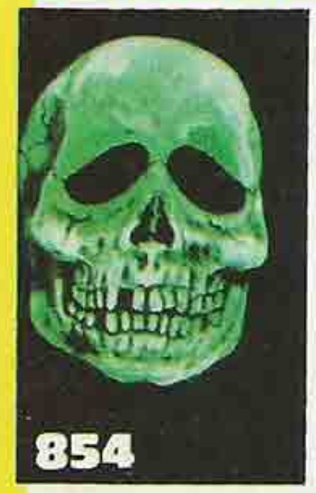

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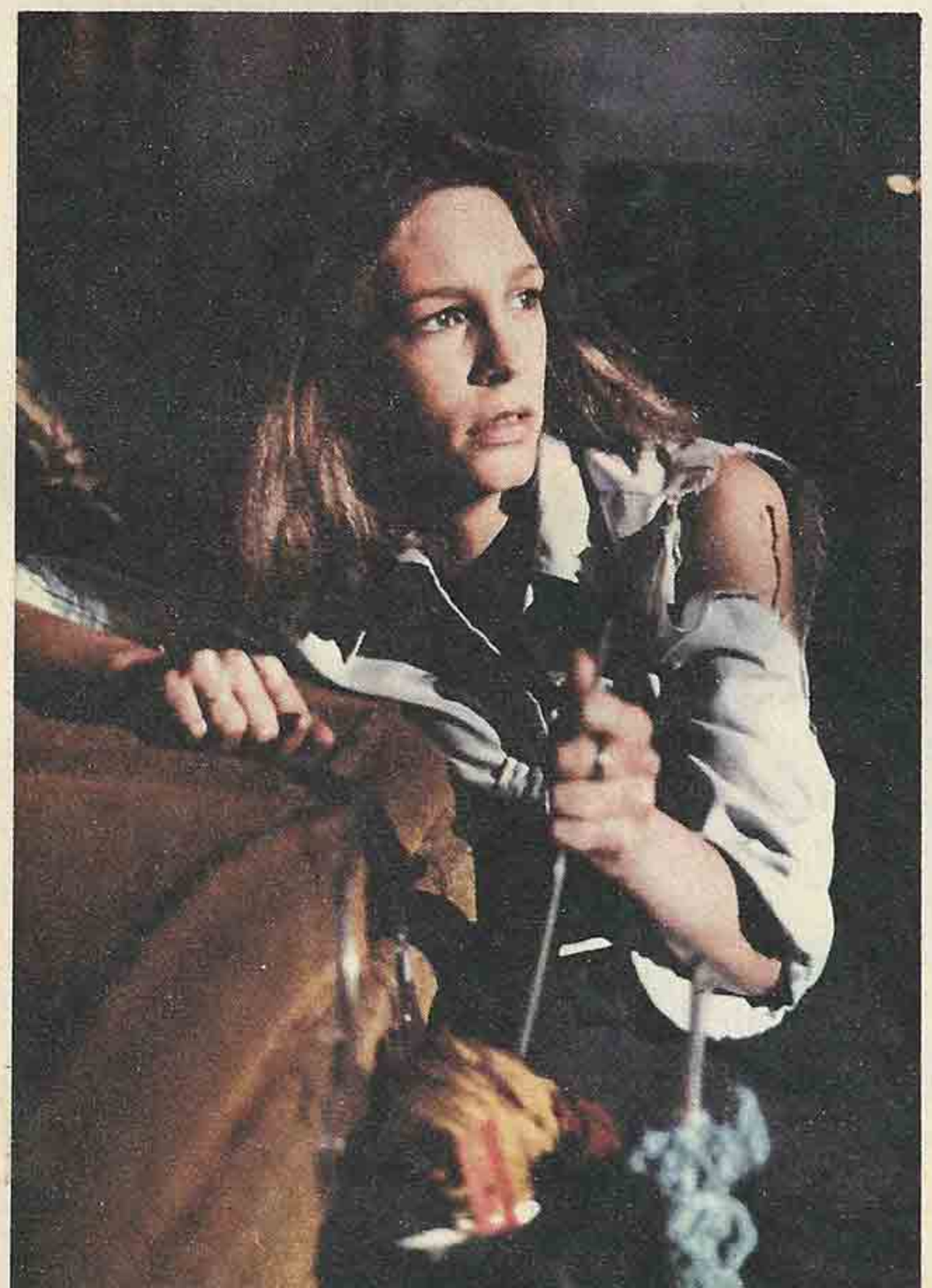
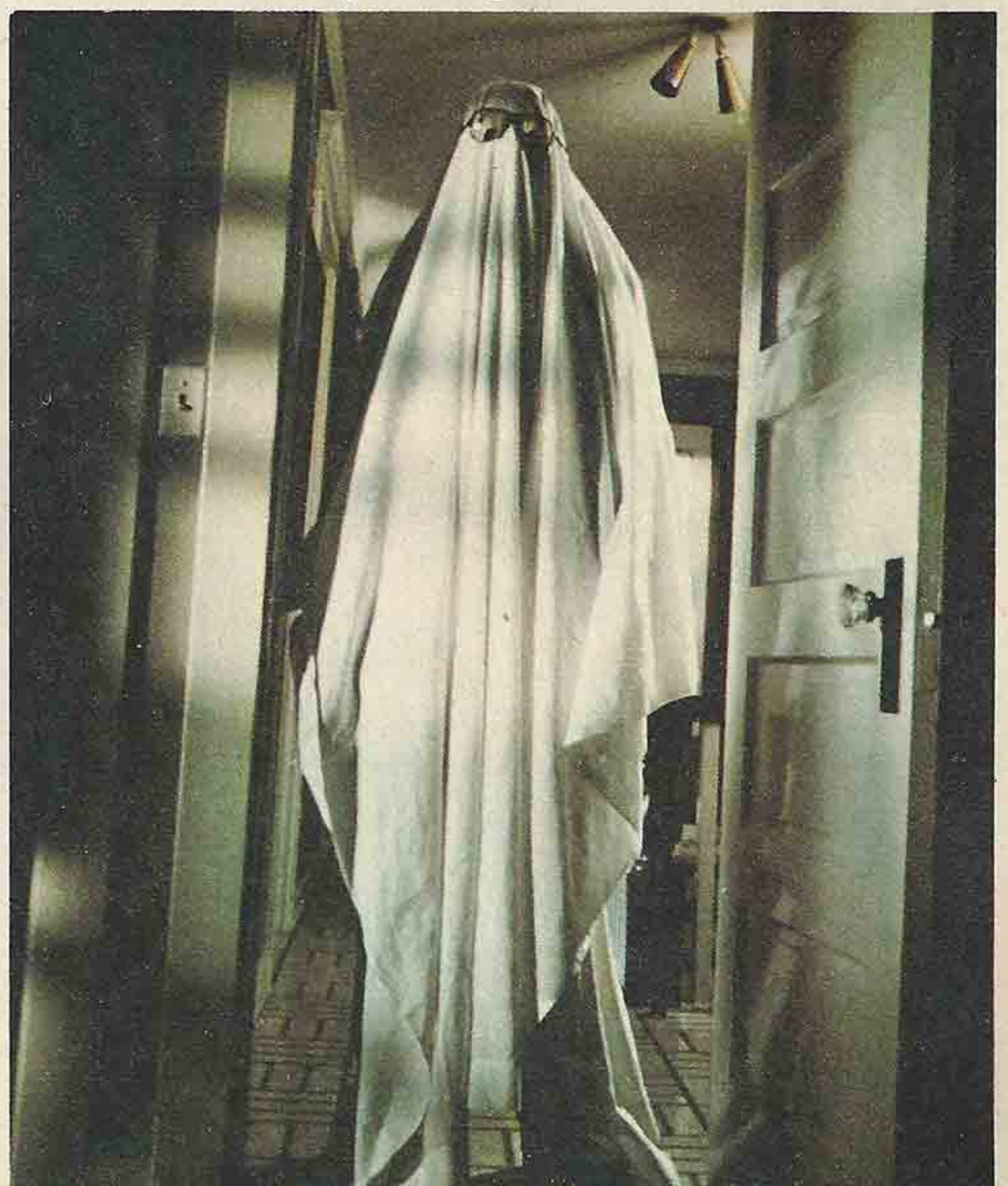
Jamie Lee Curtis in peril, and Nick Castle as the Shape in *Halloween*—the unequaled original.





Tom Savini:
A Man of Many Parts

PHOTO: © 1980 GEORGETOWN PRODUCTIONS. COURTESY TOM SAVINI

Romero's master of the crimson effect continues to explore the outer reaches of shock.

By BOB MARTIN

Tom Savini's compact athlete's body sprawls across a sofa in a midtown Manhattan apartment. It's the bright afternoon of a winter Sunday, but for Savini it's the tail end of a marathon session, spending 30 sleepless hours working on a single effects sequence for *Maniac*, his third film assignment since *Dawn of the Dead*.

"I practically grew up in a movie theater," says Savini, recalling his Pittsburgh childhood. "The only time I was ever home was when my dad would come up to the movie theater, take me out of there and take me home—or when I didn't have the ticket money. So my dream was to be a movie star—like the lovely people up on the screen.

"I've been acting since grade school—I love it, the fantasy of it, the idea that on a single stage you can be anywhere in the universe, be anybody, depending on the play and the playwright. There's something about acting, when you're playing opposite someone, when he *becomes* Ralph Waldo Emerson and you're Thoreau . . . there are times when you're in it so deep, you get tingles in your fingers

PHOTO: © 1978 THE LAUREL GROUP.

PHOTO: © 1976 BRADDOCK ASSOC./COURTESY TOM SAVINI.

Top: It was an axe-ident! From Sean Cunningham's *Friday the 13th*. Bottom left: The helicopter zombie in *Dawn of the Dead*. Bottom Right: Savini applies the crimson effect to *Martin* (no relation).

and for a few seconds you believe that you *are* back there with King Arthur, Ben Franklin or whoever. I love it."

Like many people, it was Savini's selection of a childhood idol that determined the shape of his future.

"I was 13 when I first saw *Man of a Thousand Faces*, the movie biography of Lon Chaney, starring James Cagney. It struck something deep in me—I'm sure other people who saw it didn't think twice about it, but Chaney became a major fascination for me. I started talking about him all the time, and read everything about him I could get my hands on. And then I found this magazine called *Famous Monsters*—and it dealt with Chaney with the same awe and respect I was feeling myself!

"That was when I started spending a lot of time in front of the mirror, messing up my face. So Chaney is the reason I'm doing what I'm doing."

Like Chaney, Savini is a stuntman and actor as well as a makeup wizard. And he shares another essential element with the great silent-film actor—a deep enjoyment of his work. "The word 'amateur' comes from the latin word for love. That's why amateurs are so devoted to their work—they really love it. I don't think Chaney ever lost that."

Meeting George Romero

It was Savini's involvement in school theatrics that first brought him to the attention of George Romero, back in the 60s. Recalls Savini: "George was starting

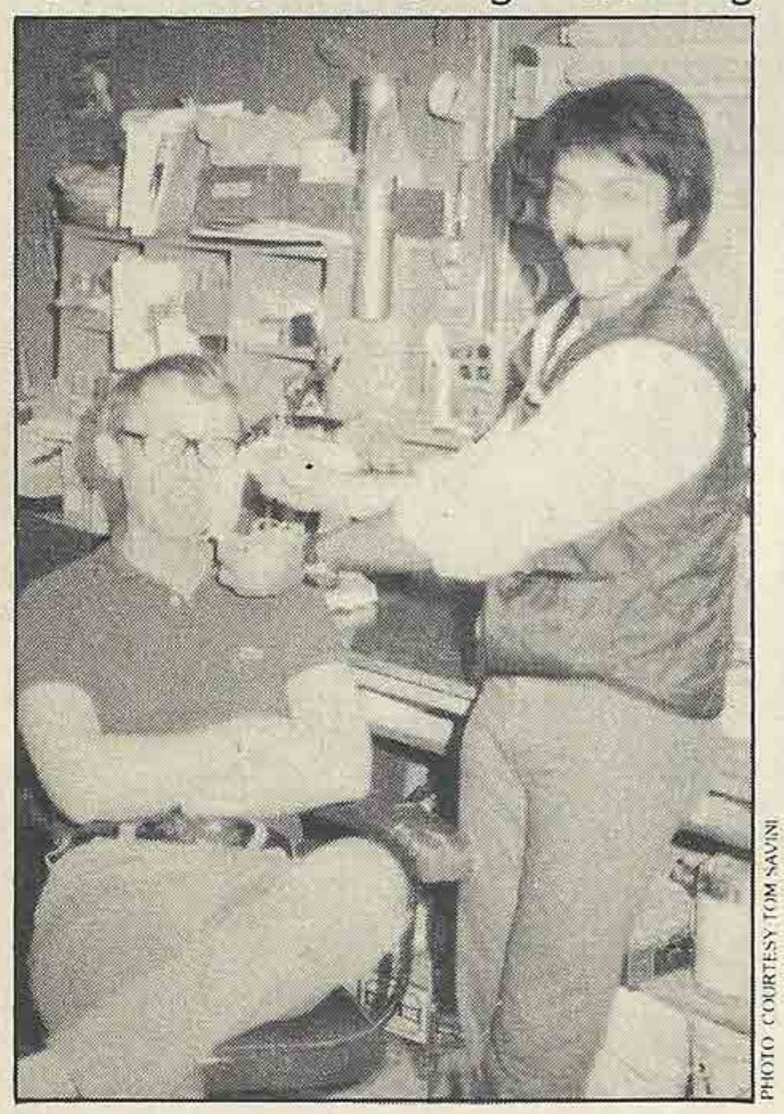


PHOTO COURTESY TOM SAVINI

Savini visits the magical workshop of his makeup idol, Dick Smith.

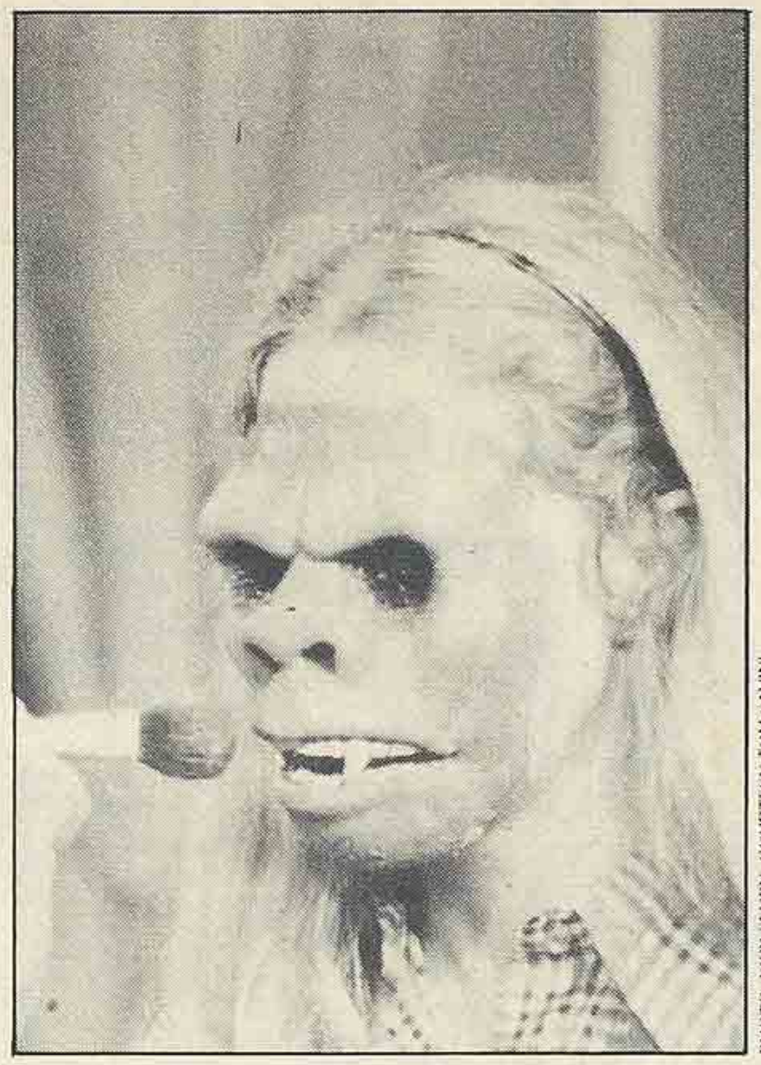


PHOTO DICK FEURY COURTESY TOM SAVINI

An early Savini makeup for a local Pittsburgh television show.

up a film called *Whine of the Fawn* and came to Central Catholic High School looking for young people to cast in the film. A lot of people read for George, but just one other fellow and I were called in for a screen test reading; but then the movie never came to be.

"It was much later that *Night of the Living Dead* was starting up, and I heard about it and went over to the studio. The elevator opened right into the office—George was right there. This was *years* later, and he remembered me, even my name! 'Hi,' I said, 'I do makeup, too.' He said, 'Fine, leave some pictures, maybe we can use you on the picture.'

"But I had already enlisted in the Army, on the 'Hold' program in order to stay out of Vietnam. It was a program in which you picked your own training, and I had chosen the photography school at Fort Monmouth. The Army called me in before George started shooting *Night*, and after I finished photo school they sent me straight over to Vietnam as a combat photographer. So that was how I missed doing *Night of the Living Dead*.

"When I came back, I was pretty messed up for about a year. I think that, later, much of my work for *Dawn of the Dead* was like a series of portraits of what I had seen for real in Vietnam. Perhaps that was one way of working out that experience."

For the six years following his discharge Savini stayed in North Carolina, near Fort Monmouth, working as a still photographer. "At the same time, I did a lot of acting—a new production every two months—and a lot of makeup, as makeup director of three theaters. Then I submitted my portfolio to Carnegie Tech and received a full fellowship; I was able to study acting and directing in exchange for teaching makeup."

It was shortly after Savini returned to Pittsburgh, in 1976, that he at last found work with Romero. "A friend of mine told me George was doing a vampire movie," says Savini, "so I went down to audition for the vampire role in *Martin*, but they had already cast John Amplas. But, I had my new portfolio with me. George was very busy, walking around getting everything organized, and I was following him from room to room, flipping the pages of my portfolio, trying to catch his eye. I guess I did catch his eye, because three days later he hired me to do the makeup effects for *Martin*."

Man of Many Talents

As so often happens when the multi-talented Savini is on a set, he wound up doing stunts and acting in the film as well, as Arthur, the young man who is discouraged from marrying Christina by the old patriarch, Tata Cuda. "It's like the time I applied to work as assistant makeup man on *Deathdream*, and was assigned as still photographer—the more you can do, the more they'll let you do."

After completing *Martin*, Savini returned to North Carolina to play Prince Philip on the stage in *The Lion in Winter*. It was during the play's run that he was contacted by Romero for *Dawn of the Dead*. And again, Savini's presence on the set gave him the opportunity to appear in the picture—as the mustachioed leader of the motorcycle gang that tears into the shopping mall.

In our first interview with Savini (FANGORIA #1), it was noted that the sequence showing the head of a zombie being partially severed by a spinning helicopter blade is the most popular of the film's effects. This time around, Savini divulges the technique employed for that effect:

"A friend of mine had asked to be in the picture," recalls Savini, "and he had a low forehead that made him perfect for that effect. I cast his head and built a foam-latex prosthetic, round and domelike, for the top of his head. The prosthetic was already severed into five sections, with each section connected by a few feet of thin fishline. So, on cue, one fellow would run with the end of the fishline, pulling apart the head in sections. Meanwhile, another fellow and I were hiding behind those crates, pumping blood up through the prosthetic."

The seemingly endless array of gruesome effects created by Savini for *Dawn* has created an active demand for his talents. In the past year, Savini has

PHOTO COURTESY TOM SAVINI

Savini devised his own makeup for this stage portrayal of Ben Franklin.

completed effects for three motion pictures.

The first of these is *Effects*, a strange suspense story concerning a low-budget horror film director who has slipped a gear while directing a Z-grade opus called *Something's Wrong*. He arranges for his actors to be *really* killed, while an undercover film crew works on the real project—a "snuff movie" to be called *Duped*. Though there is relatively little gore in the main part of the picture, Savini's major task for the film was to make a short black-and-white film that could be convincingly portrayed as genuine "snuff" when it is watched by characters in the film. "In fact," says the film's director, Dusty Nelson, "people who have seen the film have asked me how I got ahold of a real snuff movie."

Put together by a Pittsburgh crew that includes several people who worked with Romero on *Dawn* (including executive producer John Harrison, who, as a zombie, was downed by a screwdriver to the ear), *Effects* is expected to go into general distribution this spring and summer. For this film, too, Savini acts, as Nicky, one of the victims of the mad director.

Savini had no time for acting in *Friday the 13th*, an effects-filled horror film from Sean Cunningham, producer of *Last House on the Left*. "Sean is a lot like Romero on the set," says Savini. "He always knows just what he's going to do next, what sort of set-up he wants to use.

"He's also like George in the way he listens, when it comes time to shoot an effect, and, like George, he likes everything to happen *right on camera*.

"For instance, there's one scene where the killer, who, one by one, is doing away with the counselors at a summer camp, is hiding beneath a bed. The killer's hand comes out from under the bed, holds the victim's head down on the pillow, and plunges an arrow up through the bed and out of the victim's chest—all on screen, no cutaways, no cheating at all."

PHOTO COURTESY TOM SAVINI

Touching up a head destined to a horrid end in *Friday the 13th*.

Learning from a Pro

Savini feels that the effects of *Friday the 13th* and *Maniac* show a marked improvement over his previous work—including the grotesque realism of *Dawn*—a situation he credits to his recent communications with Dick Smith, perhaps the greatest living movie makeup artist.

"Learning effects is sometimes just a matter of making every mistake there is to make before you get the technique down. You wouldn't believe the crudity of the effects methods I started out with. For instance, when Dick Smith told me how he did bullet effects, my eyes just sprang open! It was pretty much what I'd been doing, except that my method was so much more primitive!

"Dick Smith is the best. He absolutely has no competition. When I first started working with foam latex, it was so hard to get it to look right, getting the right porous skin texture, or to get that thin edge, so you don't get a line between latex and skin area. Smith is the master of that—you can see it in his work on Dustin Hoffman in *Little Big Man*, or in *The Exorcist*, *The Sentinel* or *Midnight Cowboy*. When I used to see pictures of him published in STARLOG or *Famous Monsters*, I'd get a magnifying glass and study his shelves to see if there was some secret I could pick up from them. So the few times I've been able to talk with him on the phone, and what little time I've spent with him, has been an enormous help to me."

With his effects career growing by leaps and bounds, one may well wonder whether Savini feels he might be neglecting his acting career.

"When I first started doing the makeup," Savini replies, "I figured that this would get me into places that just being another actor wouldn't—and that's exactly what's happened. The same thing goes for photography, fencing, gymnastics—all the things I know of any real value to me, things that I largely taught myself. Acting or effects—I really don't know which is more important to me. Sometime I ought to sit down and analyze how I came to be doing what I'm doing. But I'm doing it all now, and I'm happy."

A Day for Terror

Director-Producer-Writer Sean Cunningham
interviewed by Bob Martin

In 1973, *Last House on the Left* created a small sensation among horror-movie addicts. Made on a miniscule budget with a plot lifted from one of Ingmar Bergman's early "art" films (*The Virgin Spring*), the film is the bizarre story of a brutal sexual murder and the savage retribution meted out by the victim's parents. "It shows the capabilities for ugliness that the human animal possesses," says Sean Cunningham, producer and co-writer of the cult classic. "Wes Craven (*Last House*'s director) and I collaborated on it with the idea to make the scariest film possible on a budget that was . . . well, just laughable. We had looked around at what was being done; there were the Clint Eastwood movies, with about 300 people being killed, but that wasn't scary; that was just 'bang-bang, you're dead.' Then there were those AIP films with Vincent Price—those were mostly escapist costume dramas. So we made this film about a kidnapping and a couple of murders. The budget was very narrow, and we were just figuring out how to *make* a feature film, so our film technique *had* to be primitive. But that primitive style really helped, in a way, because the film took on a newsreel, *verite* look . . . as if it were a documentary of these ghastly events. So it's a terribly disturbing piece of film—but it plays and plays and plays, usually at colleges. Perhaps some of the attraction is that most people feel they could make the same film themselves."

All of seven years later, Cunningham has completed his second fright film, *Friday the 13th*, this time filling the triple role of producer, director and writer. Not that Cunningham has not been active in film—he has since directed two films, *Here Come the Tigers* and *Manny's Orphans*, both wholesome family fare. "It would have been easy to finance a horror film long before this," Cunningham explains. "Hollywood has this terrible tendency to pigeonhole you, though, and after *Last House*, I was hoping that would lead to more feature work, of a more serious nature. But because of that picture, people would only think of us when they had something really sick or disgusting or otherwise awful for us to do. I was trying to develop some projects that were *not* 'Son of Last House,' and it wasn't easy."

Non-Horror Success

Cunningham did meet with some success with his non-horror projects, especially with *Manny's Children*, the tale of an out-of-work soccer coach whose trouble with the mob, the result of unpaid gambling debts, is ultimately resolved through the efforts of the soccer team at an inner-city orphanage. United Artists has picked up rights to the film, and may develop it as a television series. But Cunningham's return to horror is easily explained. "The simple truth is that I need a hit film," says Cunningham.

"So few people survive at all in this business, making *any* kind of film; it's all very nice to talk about 'cinema,' but the truth of the matter is that *Friday the 13th* seems to me a strong commercial property, and I think now is the right time for it."

The plot of *Friday the 13th* is simplicity itself, and largely a showcase for the extraordinary effects work of Tom Savini(see Savini interview on page 11). Six camp counselors gather to re-open Camp Crystal Lake, closed for several years because of three deaths that have led local townspeople to believe the camp is cursed. One counselor never even reaches the grounds—while hitchhiking, she accepts a ride from the wrong person, and pays for her mistake with a slashed throat. That night, the six counselors on the grounds continue with various teenaged pursuits (like a game of strip Monopoly), while they are exterminated, one by one. After four deaths by knife, arrow and hatchet, the two remaining counselors, Alice (Adrienne King) and Bill (Harry Crosby), realize that something strange is afoot—but the phone is

ALL PHOTOS: DICK FEURY © 1980 CUNNINGHAM FILMS, LTD.

Top Opposite: Someone is lurking—will Mrs. Voorhees (Betsy Palmer) be his next victim?

Above: Lovely Laurie Bartram (Brenda) compares mugs with the Savini sculpture stand-in for the axe-ident sequence (see p. 11). Below: No escape for Marcie.

dead, and someone has tampered with the engine of the camp's pickup truck.

Cunningham feels that *Friday the 13th* is not entirely a return to the brutal horror tactics of *Last House*. "If you examine it , *Last House on the Left* has a sort of cynical edge to it," says Cunningham in comparing the two films. It seems to say, 'You want horror? Well, here's *real horror.' Friday the 13th*, on the other hand, is a roller-coaster ride, a funhouse sort of thing.

"It's the same sort of thing as when you're eight and you hide in the bushes when your sister comes home. You jump out of the bushes to scare her—and then you laugh. It's just amusing for me to sit in on a screening and watch the audience jump."

The Squirm Factor

At some of the film's early screenings, Cunningham found that the audiences were not just jumping—they were starting to squirm a bit too much for his taste.

"Tom Savini is so good at what he does," Cunningham says, "and the effects that we used for this picture are so good, that you find yourself wanting to leave in more of an effects scene than you should to get a strong shock effect. It can go over the border of shock; gore itself isn't scary, it's disgusting. In the editing process, you only see it as a special effect, and you can get a little jaded. As it turned out, we shot an awful lot more of the effects than were used in the picture."

Cunningham would certainly be among the first to admit that the financial success of Romero's *Dawn of the Dead* and Carpenter's *Halloween* is a major reason for the making of *Friday the 13th*. Most viewers will find an especially striking resemblance between *Friday the*

Continued on Page 70

Left: Town weirdo Ralph (Walt Gorney) checks out Annie (Robbi Morgan). Center: Ned from under the bed. Right: Strip Monopoly?

Jamie Lee Curtis

In her final encounter—only this time, the maniac is carrying a tape recorder!

By BOB MARTIN

PHOTOS: JOHN CLAYTON

"Who is this guy, anyway?" Curtis asks her off-camera companion.

In the course of conducting dozens of interviews for FANGORIA over the last two years, we've discovered one truism: that the most talented people, who are always the busiest and the hardest to get hold of, are invariably the kindest, the most generous, and the easiest to speak with.

Jamie Lee Curtis is no exception to this rule. We've been trying to arrange a session with her for over a year, with little success. The same period has seen the release of her features *The Fog, Prom Night, Terror Train* and *Road Games,* as well as television appearances on *Saturday Night Live* and in the TV movie *You're In The Army Now.* In just the past few months, she repeated the role of Laurie Strode in *Halloween II,* co-hosted a *Guinness Book of World Records* TV special with David Frost, and starred in the NBC-TV film *Death of a Centerfold,* playing the late Dorothy Stratten.

After months of non-stop work, Curtis was en route to a hideaway in the Hamptons for a long-delayed rest, when she stopped in Manhattan for a battery of interviews with such prestigious publications as *Rolling Stone* and FANGORIA. Because so many East Coast journalists were anxious to speak with Curtis, our own time was necessarily limited; nevertheless, we managed to at least touch upon all of her feature film roles.

We met Curtis in the lobby of the Berkshire Place Hotel in Manhattan. In person, she is taller and bustier than those who know her best as Laurie Strode might expect, and her manner is lively and outgoing. In fact, it seems rather hard to imagine her being intimidated by anyone—even a knife-wielding maniac. Her hair remains the light blonde color that was required for the Stratten role; as one result, she more sharply resembles her mother, actress Janet Leigh, particularly when she purses her lips in vexation.

She was in something of a giddy mood—swooping like a mock airlane as she crossed the lobby to meet us and, later, gushing like a fan when she recognized 13-year-old pop singer Stacey Lattislaw, who was also being interviewed at the Berkshire. When we commented on her new hair color, she said, "Isn't it an amazing transformation? It's like *The Howling;* that's why I look like a werewolf this morning." In fact, we found her lovelier in person than she is in her films—we were particularly impressed by the graceful arch of her eyebrows that give her gaze a special intensity.

With our first questions, we learned that Jamie Curtis (for that is the name she went by as a child) had a fairly normal childhood, considering, of course, that she was the offspring of two "movie stars" in the old Hollywood sense, Tony Curtis and Janet Leigh. The first movie she remembers seeing is *Oliver!,* especially the scene where Oliver Reed strangles Shani Wallis ("I remember her legs twitched, and my mother grabbed me and tried to cover my eyes; I kept going, 'No, I want to see . . .' "), and the first movies that actually scared her were *The Deadly Mantis* and *The Naked Prey* ("Hundreds of millions of killer ants marching . . . and they're on a raft and the guy gets 'em in his hair . . . scared the hell out of me."). She never went through a phase of adolescent rebellion, and, early in her adolescence, had a crush on David Cassidy ("Don't forget—this was the 70's. It's not *my* fault we didn't have Elvis or the Beatles.").

Though her mother was never anxious to see Curtis become a performer, little Jamie started performing early in life. Janet Leigh was involved in a charity that mounted stage shows annually, and Leigh

kept a costume closet in the basement for that purpose. After marvelling at the contents of the closet on several occasions ("It had everything—a tiger suit, sailor suits, period costumes, hula skirts—it was great."), Curtis and her friends started staging neighborhood productions.

When Curtis reached college age, she was still not certain what career lay ahead of her; criminal law and psychology were two fields that interested her, but she never developed a real passion for either. Then, one winter term, she proposed to do a field study on "breaking into show business," as an independent study course. The study, which was only supposed to last a single month, led to an entire career.

FANGORIA: Since you've done both televison and theatrical film, can you tell us how the two differ?

JAMIE LEE CURTIS: Not much, actually. The acting doesn't differ, though you may be able to get away with something a little bit broader on the small screen. But any serious work for TV . . . for instance, I made a *movie* on Dorothy Stratten, I didn't make a television movie. The only difference would be the cameraman, who has to remember he's shooting a differently shaped frame.

You may have less time with television, but, except for *Road Games,* I have not worked on a film over 23, 25 days—most of them 20 days. *Road Games,* because of the difficulties of shooting a road picture, took considerably longer.

FANG: How did you come to be involved in *Halloween?*

CURTIS: I simply auditioned for John Carpenter and Debra Hill.

FANG: Was there any discussion of the role, or of the movie?

CURTIS: No, I just met 'em, shook hands—"Hi, hi." "What have you done?" "*Operation Petticoat* for a year." "Would you like to read the scene?" "Yes, please"—read the scene—"Thank you, thank you for coming in." "Thank you."

FANG: You knew *Halloween* was a low-budget film, to be shot rather quickly; what were your expectations?

CURTIS: I was told that this was a horror film, that it did have a go-ahead, that the budget was $300,000. And it was a director that was very hot in Europe, but nobody knew him here. That was my information.

I personally never felt that the movie was going to be "it." I mean, how could anybody have had any idea? So many people are now saying, "I knew," a lot of people taking credit for John's success. But how could anyone know?

But I was thrilled to have the movie, thrilled to have all those words, and thrilled to play a character like that. I mean, I wouldn't have cast myself as Laurie—I wear tight jeans, have a low voice and big tits. Of course, when I went in for that audition, I wore an old-fashioned dress and no makeup.

FANG: In *Halloween,* virtually all the other characters played pretty much a single note, while your role called for some range. Was Carpenter's attention particularly focused on your performance?

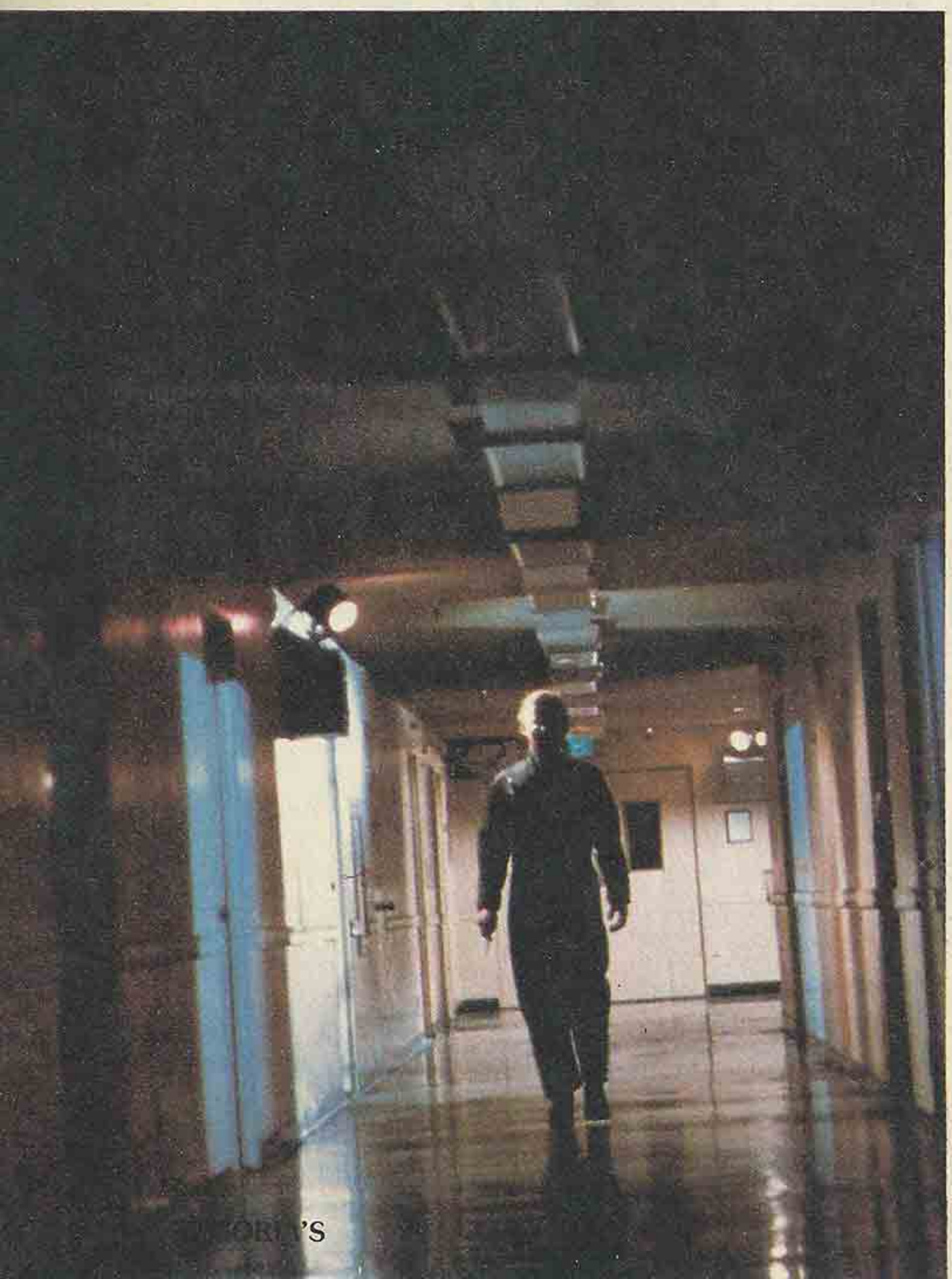
CURTIS: John doesn't laboriously work with actors; he hires you for a part he thinks you can do and lets you do. We talked about her vulnerability; and he told me that he wanted the audience to talk to her out loud during the movie—which I thought was completely weird, but sure enough they did. So we talked about it. But it was never a matter of daily hammering it out.

FANG: Were there any scenes in *Halloween* that were particularly tough for you—that you had to push to get?

CURTIS: The running and the screams are fairly easy; though there's one Panaglide shot where I run out into the city street, and I couldn't go completely wild, because I had to hit my marks, keeping pace with the camera, and there were people watching me. There's always people watching you, but in the city street at 10 o'clock, running out screaming, "help, help, help," you can't help but feel like an asshole, and I couldn't ask, "Can you clear the streets for me?", though I could now. I have asked for sets to be cleared. It's not a prima donna-ish thing, it's not to be rude. It's only to make the performance better.

Also there was the scene where I saw

A hospital corridor offers no escape as Laurie approaches the final confrontation in *Halloween II*.



Annie [Nancy Loomis] dead. John said to me, "Jamie, I don't know exactly what to do with this scene. I've got to get you opening the door, walking over here, and seeing her there. Then I need you to somehow get from here to that door . . ." where I turn around and the guy swings down.

I figured that, when shock hits you, it hits you sort of like a wave, pushing you. Like, if you walked into a room on fire, the waves of the heat and flame pushing you back. So we decided that if it would push me back, that, with the shock, I'd be pushed into the corner.

It was also tough because there was no body, no bed there, just a camera. I had to walk to X, look, imagine my best friend with her throat slit, not realize it for a second, then see it, and have that shock throw me into a corner, quiver there for a minute, turn on cue, and then be confronted by this maniac.

FANG: In that instance, would you think of a particular best friend of yours?

CURTIS: Yeah. My momma.

FANG: This may strike you as a weird question . . .

CURTIS: Great!

FANG: . . . but there are times that I've spilled red ink on my hands, and felt a sense of panic . . .

CURTIS: *Marnie*! A great movie.

FANG: Yes, *Marnie*. Anyway, I know it's red ink, but there's a part of me that believes in appearances, believes it's blood. When you're wearing a makeup wound, do you ever have to remind yourself that it's makeup?

CURTIS: No, never. It stinks, it smells like molasses, it's sticky, it dries and gets brittle. You move a muscle and it pulls on your skin.

FANG: There's such an undercurrent of humor in Carpenter's films, people suppose there's a lot of playfulness on the set.

CURTIS: Yes, there is. And I must tell you the truth, sometimes it drives me crazy.

John Carpenter shoots a movie faster than anyone I've ever seen. And he's now got a group of people who all know what their jobs are, and get things done so quickly. Everybody's called into work at 7 a.m., you don't rehearse, you go straight into makeup. John walks onto the set and says, "Let's set the camera up over here," and he just shoots it—he doesn't do any extra coverage. He really knows his movie; he'll stop you in the middle of a closeup, saying "OK, that's enough."

I like to slow down sometimes, which means I would just like to stop. For other people, it's playfulness, and some of that gets annoying. But I'd rather have playfulness that's annoying than have people walking around very somberly all the time.

FANG: Your second feature film was your second with Carpenter—*The Fog*. Liz Solley was a much tougher person than Laurie.

CURTIS: I hated my performance in *The Fog*.

FANG: Why?

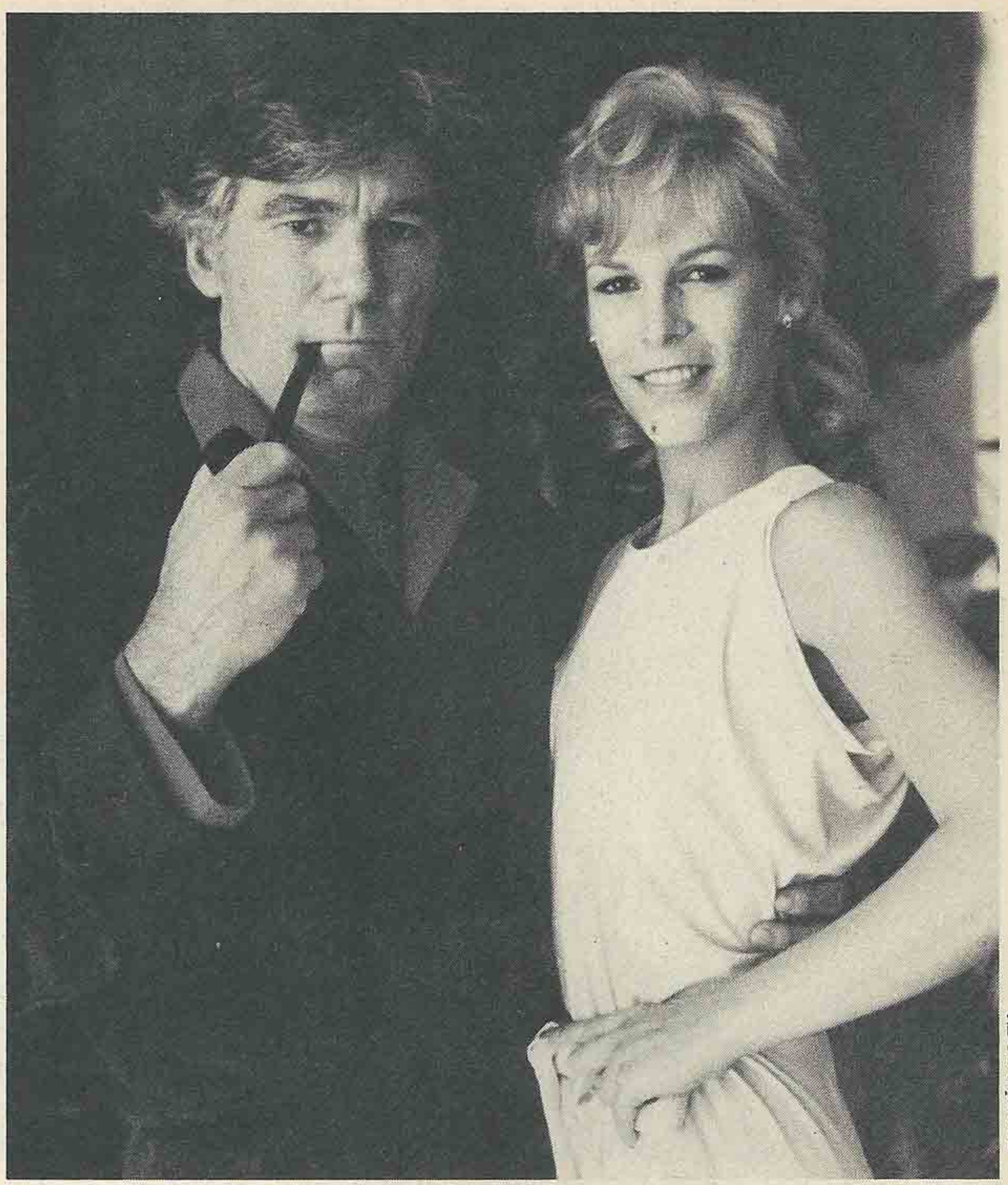


PHOTO: NBC-TV

Curtis as Stratten in *Death of a Centerfold*, with Mitchell Ryan as "Hef."

CURTIS: I just hated it. I thought it was terrible.

FANG: I did think that you did a very similiar character a lot better in *Road Games*.

CURTIS: I agree 100%. The thing is, I tend to put myself down all the time, and my friends point out to me that you can only be a little bit better than what you're given. You can't turn shit into gold. Maybe gold plate . . .

MICK GARRIS: Chocolate.

CURTIS: Right, Chocolate . . . maybe chocolate, but not gold. The only lines about my character were put in at my insistance—"Pasadena, a lot of money, and not knowing what I want to do"—that line was my entire character.

FANG: Working with the chemical fog must have made that pretty unpleasant at times.

CURTIS: The kicker fog machines were great—the mechanical ones that look like a big tube—they just shoot it out. But the petroleum ones, and the ones that burn charcoal and incense—those are just incredible. I'm just waiting for them to come out and declare them carcinogenic.

There was one great scene in there where we're driving in a truck and the fog comes at us . . . you know about that one?

FANG: Where they reversed the film? Yeah, Carpenter talked about that (issue #5).

CURTIS: Right—that was all my driving.

FANG: I didn't realize that.

CURTIS: At first they were going to do it the real way, but it just wouldn't work. It was too windy, and the fog would blow away. So they decided to reverse it, so the wall of fog just sort of materializes out of nowhere—the reverse of the wind blowing it away. They weren't going to let me do it, but they did let me. First, they filled the whole area with fog, and then started blowing it away. When it had reached about 20 feet I had to drive up sort of crooked, as if I was backing away from this wall of fog, catch the fog as it's going away, stop . . . wait for it to move away another 20, then back straight out, so it would look like I was driving in. And I did it; "Stunt" Curtis.

FANG: Tell me, "Stunt," how did you come to be involved in *Prom Night*?

CURTIS: *Disco Death— Ho! Hunh!*

FANG: That was an alternate title?

CURTIS: That's my title for it. But, y'see—I'm doing it again. At times, when I talk about my horror movies, I start getting a little negative about them.

FANG: That's OK.

CURTIS: No, it's not, because I don't

PHOTOS: KIM GOTTLIEB © 1981 DINO DE LAURENTIIS

PHOTO: COURTESY DONALD A. REED

Dr. Donald Reed bestows SF Academy honors on Curtis for *Terror Train*.

want people to think I don't like 'em, or make it sound like I didn't like doing them, or that it was an awful experience all the time. I owe them all a lot, and I'm very proud to have participated in them.

But there are some problems that I find interesting, that I think other people will find interesting, about certain movies, so I wind up talking about them.

FANG: Well, if it makes you feel any better, *Prom Night* was the only one of your movies that I actively disliked.

CURTIS: Well, I hated *Prom Night*. I shouldn't say that.

FANG: How did you get involved?

CURTIS: It was a role that was offered to me; the first role that I was ever offered.

FANG: Did they know what an asset you were at the time?

CURTIS: I think they probably did, but I didn't think they did at the time. I didn't think I was an asset at the time. *The Fog* I considered a gift; *Halloween*, I never understood why I got that, until later. When you doubt yourself as I did, you never understand why people hire you. I practically would have paid to make that movie—I had only made two movies up to that time, they offered me three times the money I was paid on *The Fog*, and it was the first role that was actually offered to me; I didn't even have to read for it. And they said, "How would you like to spend six weeks in Toronto?" To me, little insecure Jamie, the idea of making a movie was so exciting, I just went, "*sigh*"

And, I'll let you know something, all that psychopathic killer stuff was not in the original script, not in the script I agreed to do. They added that after they cut the movie. I'm very angry about that, and I'll always be angry about that because I feel I wouldn't have made the movie had it been a remake of *Halloween*—which is exactly what they were trying to do.

FANG: On the other hand, I thought *Terror Train* handled the "returned killer" thing pretty well—they kept you guessing.

CURTIS: *Terror Train* was OK . . .

FAN: They did *Dressed To Kill* a lot better than Brian de Palma ever did.

CURTIS: That female thing was real good, and they did keep you waiting until the very end.

FANG: And it had Ben Johnson—need we say more?

CURTIS: Oh, I love Ben Johnson. And that set was beautiful; that train. It was a hard movie to make.

FANG: I can imagine—all those narrow sets. How much of it was shot on a train?

CURTIS: All of it. It was all shot on a practical train, a lot of night shooting, and (cinematographer) John Alcott used all the practical lights, rewired all the lighting in the train; because there was no way we could bring in big globes. Every light on the train was rigged on a dimmer—Alcott had a guy sitting at the controls all night, and when the set-up changed, he'd look at his grid, see which lights were involved, and talk through the radio, " 'ey, Eve, Eve, 'ello darlin'—Alroit—bring up numbah fawteen through 20, bring 'em up to 50." And, magically, the lights would come up, Instant lighting. I called it radio lighting.

FANG: It was a beautifully shot picture. Now, *Road Games*. A very interesting movie. Why so long before it's released?

CURTIS: It's been out.

FANG: Not in New York.

GARRIS: It opened in L.A. six months ago.

PHOTO: KIM GOTTLIEB © 1980 AVCO EMBASSY PICTURES

Curtis and Charles Cyphers are spooked by the uncanny events in *The Fog*.

FANG: Six months ago? Didn't do much, eh?
CURTIS: It did nothin'. Neither did *Terror Train;* it wasn't at all a big money maker.
FANG: And yet *Prom Night,* which was garbage, did well. That's weird . . . Anyway, in *Road Games,* you didn't scream once.
CURTIS: Hold on . . .
FANG: You didn't . . . when the guy grabbed you in the van, you just sort of caught your breath . . .
CURTIS: Hold on . . . you're right, I didn't scream.
FANG: That must have been refreshing. How was working with Stacey Keach?
CURTIS: I learned a lot about location living from Stacey. Stacey Keach has been on the road for about three years—he hadn't been at his home for more than three weeks in more than a year at the time. He was in London doing a play, then in New York doing a play, then to Australia, then to Cannes, then Australia again, then to Hungary and now he's touring the play *Barnum* all across the country. He and his new wife Jill have clothes for every climate you can imagine, 'cause when you travel around, you never know what you're going to hit. They have rugs, candles, pictures, ashtrays . . . and it's not so hard to pack that stuff into a couple of trunks. The first thing Jill does when she gets to a place is go and buy fresh flowers. You go into their place five minutes after they've arrived, and they've unpacked that stuff and made it look like home.
FANG: I'd read, shortly after *Road Games,* that you were to be married in June. Then you didn't; why not?
CURTIS: Because I didn't think I was ready to.
FANG: It can take a lot of nerve to cancel a wedding like that, given people's expectations.
CURTIS: Exactly. People were amazed that I did it. I still have talks with some of my friends where they'll say, "I can't believe it—I could never do that . . ." What I can't believe is that someone would go through with a marriage that they weren't ready for, just so they wouldn't have a hassle. Life is full of hassles—so you call people, "I'm sorry, I decided not to get married."
FANG: You should have done the reasonable thing—gotten married and had a divorce.
CURTIS: Right, like everybody else.
DIVORCEE GARRIS: Like me!
FANG: Right, like Mick. Anyway, how did you feel about becoming involved in *Halloween II?*
CURTIS: I didn't necessarily want to make the movie. Not necessarily because it was *Halloween II,* but because I didn't want to make another horror movie. I had said after *Road Games* that it was the beginning of my non-horror future. But then I realized that I have a terrible loyalty to John and Debra—who am I to say no to them when they gave me a career? And also to the audience; most of all to the audience. Since it takes up directly from where the first one ends, the audience has the right to see the same person in the same role. If a new girl played Laurie, you'd feel real funny, and that was the biggest bond—to the audience.

And I am happy I did it; don't get me wrong. I was a little disappointed in my lack of participation, after agreeing to do it.
FANG: Laurie is drugged or injured through most of the film, which would really limit the role.
CURTIS: Uh-huh. I have about 10 lines in the entire film. I really wish I could have been in the film more.

I don't like being drugged for half the movie—I think it's just a waste of a wonderful character. In the first movie, she talked. And, for *Halloween II,* I even got them to move back the drugging halfway; I used to get drugged as soon as I got to the hospital.

But it's very difficult for me to talk about before you've seen it. Once it's out, and the reviews are out, I'd be able to talk about it more.
FANG: The Stratten film is your first non-horror film, and your first movie with a death scene.
CURTIS: Well, *Road Games* was really not a horror film, *She's In The Army Now* was not a horror film—I played a streetwise army recruit—and *Saturday Night Live* wasn't horror.
FANG: Still, it's your major break from horror. This is the one that will get press attention.
CURTIS: It already has.
FANG: Now, you've gotten a lot of flack from the press about your horror films—and joined in on that yourself to some extent . . .
CURTIS: Not at all. I'm not at all upset about having been in any of them, I feel my work has been good in them. It's just that I'm an actor—I want to be able to do different things.
FANG: The press, then, has given you a certain amount of trouble on them; how has the press dealt with your involvement in the Stratten film, which some might say is a sensational exploitation film?
CURTIS: They've dealt with it very well—they haven't brought it up to me once yet.
FANG: . . . then we're the first. What are your feelings on that?
CURTIS: I don't write these movies. I am an actor; and I was given a role that I thought was a very tragic role, in a film that was going to be made, and I thought it was a wonderful opportunity to show some different sides of my ability in a tragic love story.
FANG: I know you're anxious to be getting out to Long Island to enjoy the sun, so we've got just one more question for you. Why do you suppose it's so hard for Hollywood to detect talent when it is displayed in a horror film?
CURTIS: Life . . . in the fast lane. The price you pay when you want to sing the blues.

PHOTO: KIM GOTTLIEB © 1980 AVCO EMBASSY PICTURES

Curtis' famous Mom, Janet Leigh, joined the cast of *The Fog*.

PHOTO: KIM GOTTLIEB © 1980 AVCO EMBASSY PICTURES

Falling for the old hand-through-the-window trick in *The Fog*.

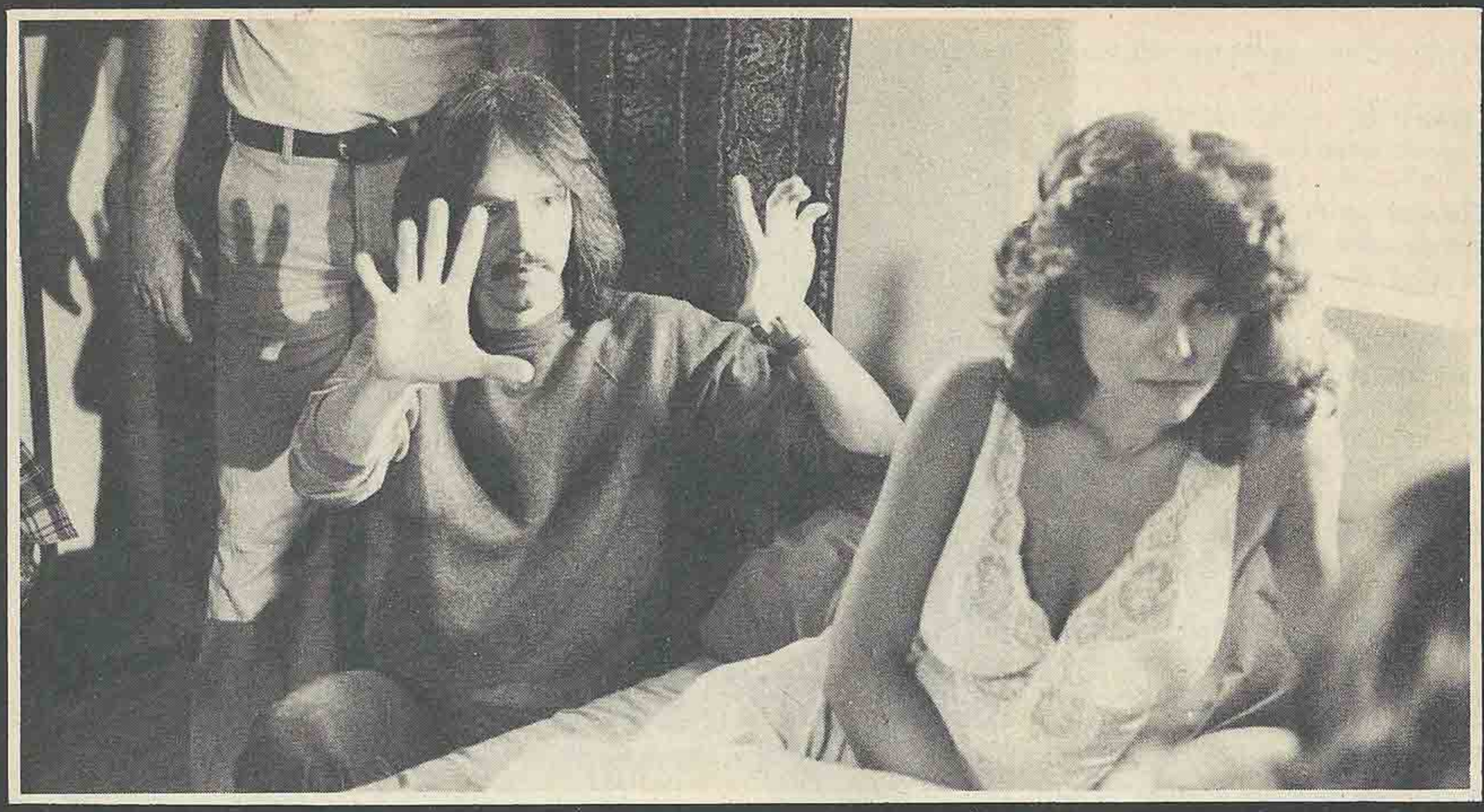


PHOTO: KIM GOTTLIEB AVCO EMBASSY PICTURES

JOHN CARPENTER

The man who broke into Hollywood "Escape(s) from New York"—with a few stops in between.

By BOB MARTIN

The films of John Carpenter, even those outside of the horror category, like *Elvis* and *Assault on Precinct 13*, are about death; death and the fragility, the transience of life. Whether it's a sniper's bullet, a masked maniac wielding a butcher's knife or a handful of pills, Carpenter has found that life appears in sharpest relief against a backdrop of death.

Carpenter is in basic agreement with this interpretation of his craft, taking the common thread a bit further. "It's also about people who are trapped or isolated in some way. We're all trapped in our minds—the unknown is whatever's outside, all around you," says the youthful director. "In a sense, it's the essence of paranoia—'They're out to get me!' " In the light of these comments, it's not particularly surprising to learn that the first science-fiction film Carpenter ever laid eyes on was that paranoid classic *It Came from Outer Space*, when he was just five years old.

"I went to all the movies I could—I especially loved horror movies and science-fiction films a whole lot," he says. "Later, I guess I became most familiar with Roger Corman's films, maybe because he made so many of them. I still think he's a pretty good director. Some of the low-budget films, in particular, are really good. One of my favorites was *Not of This Earth*, which is a real little gem, very well-directed."

By the mid-60s, Carpenter had entered the film business—"Shooting little tiny movies starring me and my friends; little 8mm movies—very crude. I'd shoot them, cut 'em together and put some kind of soundtrack on them. In other words, they're *bad*. Other people across the country were doing the same thing. I'd read about them in fanzines—there was a whole big fanzine thing going on then. *Everybody* was publishing their own fan magazine then, which I also did (called *Fantastic Films Illustrated*—no relation to any current publication), and they would put in pictures from their own movies. There was one fellow who was really prolific, his name was Don Glut.* He was making and starring in these incredible movies— Captain Marvel movies, various monster things—he was the *king*. At the time, what I wanted was to be like Don Glut. I never really did anything as good, I was never that technically proficient. I wasn't quite that obsessed—I just got out there and fooled around. So if I hesitate to talk about them, it's because I don't think they're very good. They don't show a lot of promise."

Advice to Newcomers

Fifteen years later, the young man whose backyard epics showed so little promise is the hottest young director in film, and definitely the most popular director among horror film addicts young and old. What advice does Carpenter offer youthful enthusiasts anxious to follow in his footsteps?

"I'm kind bad at advice. . . I started at film school in 1968, and learned every technical aspect of filmmaking there. But now that whole area's glutted—*everybody's* going to film school. More important than that is perseverence; make up your mind that you're going to direct films, and that nothing in this world is going to stop you. *That's* the important thing. You have to be willing to wash cars, to starve. . . whatever, until you get a chance to direct.

"You also have to realize that you make your own way. No one ever 'gives' you a break; no one will say, 'I'll be your angel, here's a million dollars—go and make a great film.' That just doesn't happen. You have to struggle.

"In terms of my own experience, as I approached the movie business, I would work on anything. I'd write a script for anybody who wanted to hire me; I decided I was going to be a *good* writer. . . and things just sort of happened. Perseverance. . . and luck. Perseverance, mostly.

"There're several ways to get in. Probably the best way is to write your way in; to develop your skills as a writer until you can write a screenplay that everybody wants, and then refuse to sell it to anyone unless you can direct it yourself."

It's well-known that Carpenter's introduc-

* Don Glut later became a scriptwriter for Marvel comics, and most recently penned the novelization of *The Empire Strikes Back*. Legend has it that John Milius, while in college, made a student film on the bizarro lifestyle of Glut. Glut asked Milius for a guarantee that he could again play himself if the picture ever became a feature. Milius turned him down, on the basis that he was wrong for the part.

PHOTO: COMPASS INTERNATIONAL PICTURES

PHOTO: COMPASS INTERNATIONAL PICTURES

Far left: Carpenter composes a shot featureing Adrienne Barbeau for *The Fog*. Center & below: *Assault on Precinct 13*; Carpenter's plans for *Escape from New York* call for similar elements – high action, broad heroics, slightly cynical humor and "a love of movies and adventure."

tion to feature direction was *Dark Star,* which started as a student project while Carpenter and Dan O'Bannon were attending the University of Southern California film school. Less well-known is an earlier student project, *The Resurrection of Broncho Billy,* which was the first Carpenter film to reach a wide audience. *Bronco Billy* concerns a young man (played by Johnny Crawford, Chuck Connors' young co-star in TV's *The Rifleman*) who escapes the problems of adolescence by fleeing to a fantasy world composed of the most familiar cliches of television and film Westerns. In just a few minutes of film-time, and with almost no dialogue, *Broncho Billy* displays a romantic poignancy only hinted at in such similarly themed features as *Brewster McCloud* and *Breaking Away*. Carpenter edited the film, and shared camera, lighting, directing and writing chores with his fellow students, including his current production designer, Tommy Wallace, and another long-time associate, Nick Castle.

Rough Starts

According to Carpenter, the film was originally conceived by its producer, John Longenecker, a friend of Crawford's who wanted to use the young actor in a Western setting, and it was the film's director, Jim Rocos, who first suggested the fantasy element. With the help of USC, it was arranged for the film to run for one week at a national theater, thus allowing it to be nominated for—and win—a 1970 Academy Award for best short subject. The fact that the man who received the trophy, John Longenecker, continues to work in relative obscurity, is just one more testament to the difficulty of getting a start in Hollywood. "John has worked on many films since then," says Carpenter, "and he's been trying to get his own things going, but he just hasn't had a break."

During and after the production of *Dark Star*—which, due to a problem with effects and finances, took a grueling four years to make—Carpenter sharpened his writing skills, turning out perhaps a half-dozen screenplays for various studios. Only one of these has been produced to this date—*Eyes*, written for Columbia as a vehicle for Barbra Streisand, became *The Eyes of Laura Mars,* but only after several hands had removed most of the logical construction from the Carpenter screenplay.

Then came *Assault on Precinct 13*.

Basically a remake of Howard Hawks' classic Western *Rio Bravo,* the film also gives more than a passing nod to John Ford's *Fort Apache* and any number of classic Western, crime and action films of the 30s and 40s. "That was the first movie I had done on a schedule and it was just the *toughest* thing to do," says Carpenter, "but it has many, many things I'm proud of. It's my personal favorite of all my films. There's a lot of raw energy to it and a lot of youthful enthusiasm, a love of movies, there."

Assault boils down to a tale of soldiers and Indians; only in this instance the "Indians" are the members of a bloodthirsty ghetto street gang, while the "soldiers" are a handful of cops and convicted felons trapped in an abandoned precinct house in the heart of "enemy territory"—an L.A. slum district.

Hawks and Ford, in dealing with similar characters and situations, but in a historical setting, were able to uncover archetypes of bravery: Carpenter's task was, in many ways, the more difficult one—to deal with the same qualities in a modern setting. "The characters in *Assault* were so much larger than life." Carpenter notes, "it's a little bit tough to play someone in modern situation with that larger-than-life attitude—the hero business. People think it's kind of cornball. It's out of fashion—or at least it was in 1976, when the film was released, though it may be coming back, with the way the country's changing. But I wasn't thinking: Let's bring in this type of cliched character, then that type. The basic premise was a tribute to *Rio Bravo,* but it was dangerous ground, because I had to portray these characters as *somewhat* real, and yet get across the qualities of the characterizations in old Western movies."

Horrific Non-horror

Assault, while classified as non-horror, offers one of the best examples of Carpenter's suspense-horror technique, when a young girl, attempting to make a purchase from an ice cream vendor, is brutally murdered. The impact of the relatively bloodless scene is blunt, but it draws its greater strengths from the subtlety and grace of its execution.

"From the first frame, that whole sequence with the ice cream truck and the little girl was all very carefully engineered," recalls Carpenter.

Below, left to right: Kurt Russell—to star in *Escape*—in his stunning impersonation of the legendary *Elvis*; Jamie Lee Curtis at bay in *Halloween*; Nick Castle as The Shape; and Carpenter, Curtis and John Houseman on the set of *The Fog*.

PHOTO: ABC-TV

PHOTO: KIM GOTTLIEB COMPASS INTERNATIONAL PICTURES

"She was marvelous. What I really didn't expect was for her to die as well as she did. She just stood there shocked for a moment, then fell backwards.

"The really tough thing to do on that was to rig up the ice cream cone just right (so that it would blow apart, as if from the passing bullet). The ice cream would hit her in the face, or it wouldn't work at all. And she was a little frightened of it at first—she didn't know what was going to happen. But, once she got with it, she wanted to do it again and again."

Carpenter's first work for television came at this point, a project initially titled *High Rise*, later renamed *Someone Is Watching Me*. Initially written for Warner Brothers' feature division, Carpenter's script came to the attention of Richard Kobritz, the executive in charge of TV production at Warner. Though Kobritz seldom finds the time to produce Warners' telefilms himself, Carpenter's script and his work on *Assault* motivated him to make an exception (as he would again make for Tobe Hooper's TV version of *'Salem's Lot*—see FANGORIA #4). For the story of a young woman who is terrorized by an unseen sniper in a neighboring building, Carpenter managed to elicit one of the few truly good performances by actress and ex-model Lauren Hutton in the leading role. During the course of the filming, Carpenter also happened to fall in love with Hutton's co-star, Adrienne Barbeau. Luckily, the feelings were mutual, and the two subsequently married.

The independently produced *Assault*, meanwhile, found a distributor in Irwin Yablans' Turtle Releasing. It was Carpenter's facility with *Assault*'s suspense sequences that led Yablans to offer Carpenter the director's chair on the first film from his newly formed company, Compass International.

That film was *Halloween*.

Hitchcock-type Suspense

In a separate interview with Irwin Yablans, FANGORIA was told that *Halloween* was started with the desire to do "practically a textbook suspense film, a throwback to the Hitchcock style; no explicit sex, almost no violence—one that would really have to rely on timing and suspense.

"Now people say to me, 'How could you make such a violent film?' Then I ask them to tell me where they actually saw any violence in that film. But the film itself is such an intense experience that people feel that they've been violated."

It was Yablans who figured that a group of teenaged babysitters would make the best set of victims for such a film; Carpenter suggested the Halloween-night setting. And it was Yablans who destined the film for perennial release by changing the working title from *The Babysitter Murders* to *Halloween*.

The most frequently cited sequence in *Halloween* is the lengthy opening scene, apparently one take. "We did originally shoot that in one take," explains Carpenter. "In fact, there were a couple of one-takers that were very good, and longer than what you saw. One of these was a complete mindblower. I think the audience would have said, 'Wow, they did that in one take!" But it didn't move quite fast enough. I thought that if we shortened it, it would be more effective. Since we had the option of doing that, we did."

The method Carpenter used to combine the two takes into a single, "seamless" take was to cut them together "in the black"—for instance, when young Michael dons his mask, the entire screen momentarily goes black. That gave Carpenter the opportunity to unnoticeably cut to a different take, giving the appearance of a single faultless take.

Some viewers of the film might find some confusion in the multiple credits for the killer in *Halloween*. "Michael," like so many Hollywood creations, was actually a collaborative effort. The credits clearly state that Michael, age 6 is played by Will Sandin, "except for his hands," Carpenter points out, "which were played by Debra Hill. Most of the time, he was played by Nick Castle (credited as "The Shape"). When he broke into the closet after Jamie Lee Curtis, Tommy Wallace had designed that closet and knew the best way to tear it apart, so he was played by Tommy for that one sequence. When he took the mask off, he was played by an actor (Tony Moran, billed as "Michael, Age 26"). When he was shot out of the window, he was played by Jim Windburn, the stuntman."

Rock 'n' Roll Fan

The release of *Halloween* and its phenomenal reception at the box office, brought Carpenter a deluge of offers. One of these was the opportunity to direct the TV film

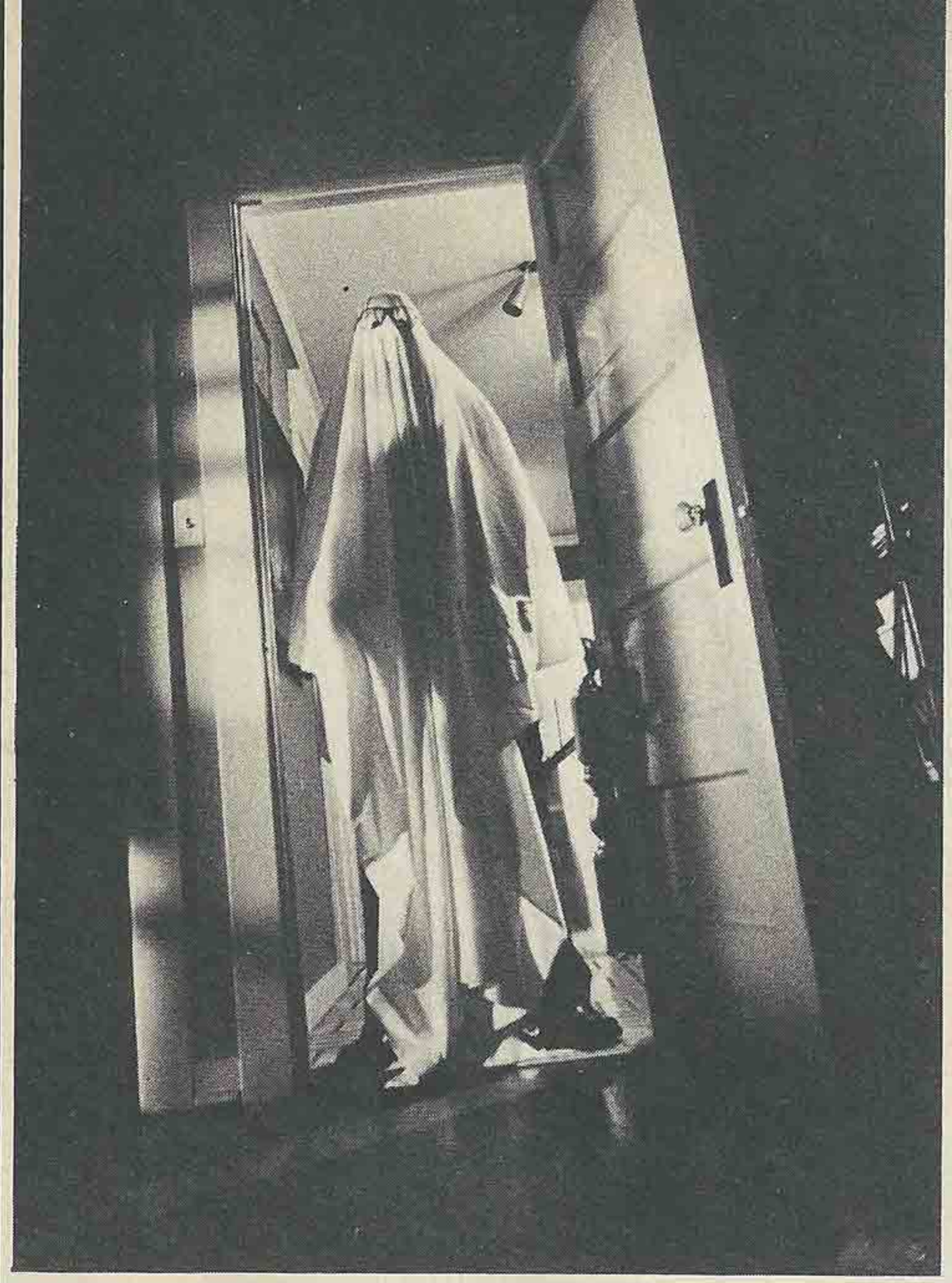


PHOTO: KIM GOTTLIEB /COMPASS INTERNATIONAL PICTURES

PHOTO: KIM GOTTLIEB /AVCO EMBASSY PICTURES

biography of Elvis Presley. Carpenter, a rabid fan of rock 'n' roll, immediately accepted.

"*Elvis* was a struggle in a number of ways, but not because of any of the people involved," says Carpenter. "It was just an *outrageous* schedule—30 days to shoot three hours—to make a period musical, set in the 50s and 60s. There was *no* time; I didn't see any locations; there were technical problems beyond belief. And because of the speed with which we had to get the film ready for television, there was really no time for post-production. It was just cut together and thrown on TV. So I was disappointed in that aspect of it. I also got married and went on a honeymoon, so I wasn't around—but I loved the people involved in *Elvis*; I really enjoyed working with Dick Clark. He's a really nice man, always straight with you."

But Carpenter is his own harshest critic when *Elvis* is under discussion; the telefilm was a huge success for the ABC network, outrating such tough competition as *Gone with the Wind* and the first network broadcast of Milos Forman's *One Flew over The Cuckoo's Nest*. *Elvis* added even further to the enhancement of the fastest growing reputation in Hollywood.

The Fog was Carpenter's next project, and his first theatrical film with what could be called a "respectable" budget. Carpenter knew that his fans and the movie industry would be approaching his next film with high expectations, and he was not about to disappoint them. But he didn't make things easier for himself; the title character of *The Fog* proved the most unmanageable "actor" any director might care to work with.

"We shot thousands and thousands—*hundreds* of thousands of feet to get that fog right," Carpenter recalls, with a slight shudder. "It was the most film I've ever shot on one feature, take after take after take with the widest shots imaginable.

"The shot where Jamie Lee Curtis and Tommy Atkins are stopped in the truck and the fog just rolls down at them was done by actually filling that whole street with real fog, produced by a fog machine. We blasted the fog away from camera with a wind machine, and let the wind carry it away. By reversing the film, we had the fog appearing in the distance, then apparently rolling down the street, *toward* the camera."

The Fog was the first of Carpenter's films to require any extensive special effects, and for this purpose Carpenter recruited Rob Bottin, a former assistant to Rick Baker (see Bottin's interview in FANGORIA #6).

"Rob was great, a real friendly and easygoing guy," recalls Carpenter. "I'd just get together with him and say, 'Rob, I need this and this'—he'd come in with something just right. For instance, Wormface, the ghost with the worms crawling on him. I told him what I wanted, and he came back with a model of the ghost's head—unbelievably elaborate. He even had it so we could light it to make the ghost transparent; I could have gone much further with it, if I'd had the time to restructure the sequence. His work was really sensational—he brought the worms with him!"

Crucial Decisions

Fog being a notoriously amorphous phenomenon, it's hardly surprising that Carpenter made some decisions late in the shooting schedule that changed the ultimate shape of the film. "I did some real shooting after the first rough cut," he says, "punching it up. For instance, when the fog rolls over the three men on the trawler, that was it. I didn't show them getting killed. I later went back and showed their deaths."

According to Carpenter, his original intention was "to do a Val Lewton film . . . I wanted to do *Isle of the Dead*, or *I Walked with a Zombie*. I love Lewton's films—they're very shadowy, all suggestion, and he has all sorts of melodrama going. I was a real fan of that sort of thing, and that's the sort of movie I initially shot. When I cut it together and looked at it—really, it just can't compete with the kind of movie *we've seen*."

As Carpenter acknowledges, even at the time Val Lewton and Jacques Tourneur were working, there was a segment of the audience that felt cheated by films like *The Cat People* and *Curse of the Demon*, no matter how well beloved they are by others.

"I'm not a giant fan of all-out *horror*," Carpenter replies. "I got into *The Fog* and I wanted to go one way, and then I decided to go another—I don't know whether I chose right

The fact that Carpenter composes and performs the music for his films makes post-production a truly maddening experience. "First of all," Carpenter notes, "the edited film must work by itself, without any music or sound ef-

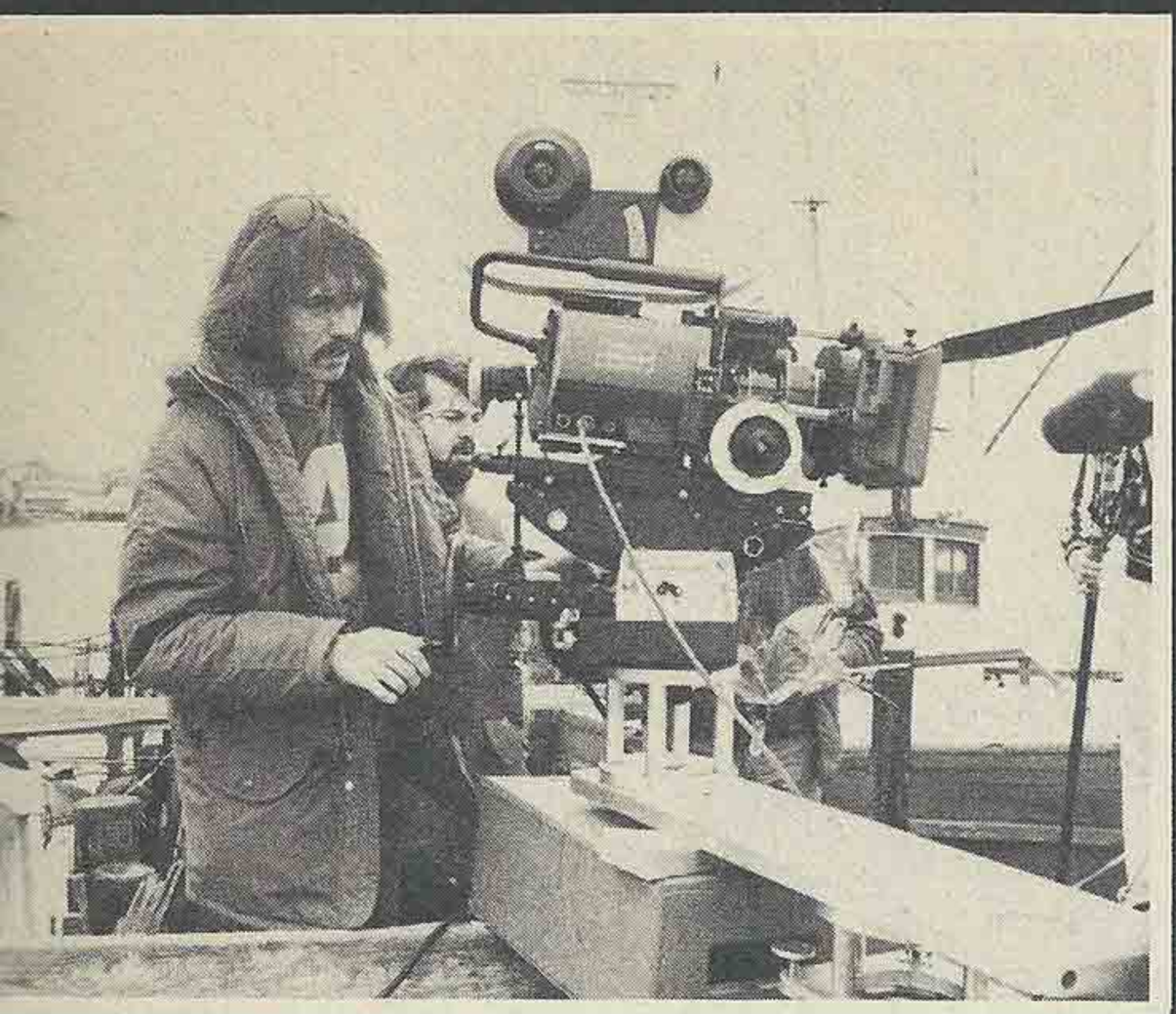


PHOTO KIM GOTTLIEB AVCO EMBASSY PICTURES

PHOTO KIM GOTTLIEB AVCO EMBASSY PICTURES

Above: Carpenter on location in Point Reyes, California, for *The Fog*. Right: Actor Hal Holbrook totes a solid gold cross in the climactic confrontation scene of *The Fog*.

fects. It can be rough, but it must tell the story, make sense and have its own ups and downs. Then the *enhancement* of that is the music and the sound effects—everything is brought to life. So the first process is editing; then you know what you're dealing with; you can proceed to enhance it—at least that's my approach."

But the process of composing the score begins long before. "Right from the beginning, as I'm writing the script, I hear snatches of the score," reveals Carpenter. "Sometimes it changes, depending on how much I think a particular scene needs, what mood it needs. But I'm beginning to hear the music for the next one right now, for instance."

The Fog was Carpenter's most elaborate score to date, and also gave him a unique opportunity to indulge his love of rock 'n' roll. Some of the records played by cinematic disc jockey Stevie Wayne (Adrienne Barbeau) were actually recorded by Carpenter's own rock ensemble, Coup de Ville.

"The Coup de Villes is what we call ourselves," says Carpenter. "Coup de Ville is probably too similar to Willy DeVille's more realistic and very fine group, Mink deVille. But the Coup de Villes is three of us—Nick Castle, Tommy Wallace and myself. We write our own songs, and usually play at wrap parties. Nick Castle can sound like Elvis Presley, Dean Martin and various others; we started just singing at parties. Tommy and I were in a rock group together in college and in high school back in Kentucky. It's gotten so we're all too busy now to really get together and perfect it. We'd all love to do something really worthwhile, not something just thrown together to do at parties. But we're usually a big success at them, 'cause we're so *bad* that people laugh!"

Musical Appetite

Carpenter's personal taste in music begins and ends with rock 'n' roll. Rockabilly is a special favorite, as indicated by his reverence for Elvis and his deference to Willy deVille, but Carpenter says his taste in rock is universal.

"I can't say I'm a great fan of the new wave, yet," says Carpenter, "I love the B-52's. *Dance This Mess Around* is unbelievably fabulous. Nick Castle keeps after me to get out and see some of these new groups like the Motels and the Specials, but I just haven't seen them."

As for his next film, Carpenter's plans in that direction are finally solid. The screenplay *Escape from New York*, written by Carpenter for 20th Century-Fox back in his struggling days, has been newly reworked by Carpenter and Nick Castle. It will go into production for Avco Embassy Pictures later this year, with a $7 million budget. Debra Hill will again be producing, and Carpenter's favorite director of photography, Dean Cundey, has signed on as well. Starring as Snake Pliskin will be Kurt Russell (Elvis Presley in *Elvis*). *Escape* will be set in 1997 in Manhattan, now converted to a maximum security prison.

Carpenter concedes that *Escape* will, in some ways, be a return to his style in *Assault on Precinct 13*. "Very much so," he says. "It's not a remade Western, or a tribute to any one film, but it will share a lot of that feeling of love of movies and adventure. At least I hope so, if it works out."

Interviewed by Steve Swires in the current issue of STARLOG (#39), Carpenter elaborated on the film's plot: "The story concerns a rescue mission. A plane carrying the President is highjacked to New York, where it's crashlanded inside the prison. The criminals hold him hostage, so the government has to send someone to get him out. They send in the world's greatest criminal— Snake Pliskin. The film is about what he runs into in Manhattan."

Carpenter had spoken to Jim Danforth and John Dykstra about the film's effects, but their other commitments make them unlikely candidates for *Escape*. As FANGORIA spoke to him, Carpenter was bubbling with enthusiasm for the FX work of Bob and Dennis Skotak, and their stunning executions for *Battle Beyond the Stars*.

Our final question to Carpenter concerned his phenomenal success, and if he ever felt that it came too quickly. "It felt like a long time coming, to me," he replies. "I was ready to make movies 12 years ago, and this all started happening in the last four.

"But I do have some mixed feelings. . . in the sense that everyone's expectation is to be scared all the time. I hate to compete with myself. And to compete with *Halloween* all the time is a dangerous thing to do.

"It's certainly changed my life—made a lot of changes in it, some good, some bad. All changes bring good and bad; and it causes a certain amount of stress. But I don't take it too seriously."

Rick Baker
and
An American Werewolf in London

By JEFF GELB

Is there a fright film fan who isn't already aware of Rick Baker's list of contributions to the genre? In the last ten years, he has created some of the genre's most memorable monsters (and victims). Gorilla fans alone can thank him for whatever redeeming qualities there were in the Dino deLaurentiis remake of *King Kong*; that was Baker (plus crew) pulling the wires and operating the other controls that made Kong smile, frown, and even puff his cheeks. This year he created what has to be the screen's quintessential gorilla suit for *Incredible Shrinking Woman*; fans were left hoping to see more of Sidney and less of Lily. In between there have been some incredible Baker creations in such diverse fare as *Star Wars, The Fury* and even *The Incredible Melting Man*.

Perhaps the reason Rick's work is so good, and therefore so popular, is because he really enjoys his work. Indeed, in the following conversation with Baker about his then just-completed work for John Landis's *An American Werewolf in London*, it's abundantly clear that Rick Baker is one of the monster movies' biggest fans.

FANG: How long have you and John Landis been talking about doing *Werewolf* together?

BAKER: All the way back to when I first met John, when we did *Shlock*. I wasn't sure what I'd be doing with the *Werewolf* idea back then; we didn't have the technology ten years ago that we have now, so we weren't originally going to be so elaborate with it. John wanted a spectacular transformation, but originally he didn't intend to show the wolf. At one point he even talked about using a dog for the wolf.

Ten years later, it's still basically the same film with some changes and, of course, modernized technology. The transformation scene was still the part I was most interested in doing; I'd always wanted to do one.

FANG: Speaking of man-to-wolf transformations, there's a pretty spectacular one in *The Howling*, a movie we understand you had something to do with.

BAKER: I got a call from director Joe Dante and producer Mike Finnell who wanted me to do the effects for *The Howl-*

PHOTOS: © 1981 Universal Pictures

David (David Naughton) feels the first, painful throes of his transformation in *An American Werewolf*.

ing. They didn't have a script at the time so they lent me the book on which it's based. I was interested in doing a werewolf movie, but Landis had already approached me about doing his. But there were other times he said a film would happen and circumstances prevented it.

I was real interested in *The Howling*, and had some ideas about how to do the transformation. The producers offered me virtually total freedom on design and promised they would listen to my suggestions about filming my effects, which is something that rarely happens in this business. They made me a very appealing offer, but because of my commitment to *Werewolf* I decided against taking on *Howling*.

I suggested they go to Rob Bottin for effects, and said I'd help him out. Rob's my protege; he was a 14-year-old kid when he started working with me. At that time, he had virtually no make-up experience, and I taught him sculpting and design. Anyway, Rob was hired to do the *Howling* effects and I was around to make sure they were done right. He and I sat down and, in hopes of getting a bigger effects budget, decided to do a test effects reel of the transformation scene. We kicked around a lot of ideas, and at that point I started thinking, "Well Rick, you're kind of cutting your own throat here; you're telling Rob all this stuff and what are you going to do with *Werewolf*?" but I ended up telling Rob most of what I planned to do on my film because I figured if *Werewolf* never got made, at least I'd have been involved in a film that had the sort of transformation scene I'd always wanted to do.

So I did some sketches and sculpting for the test film; the last stage of one of the heads. But I realized it was just too much like what I was going to be doing for *Werewolf*, so I bowed out at that point.

Rob went on, armed with the information I'd given him, and added his own ideas to create the transformation scene used in *Howling*. I consulted with him throughout the shooting, telling him where to get stuff and what to use and how to do it. When he ran into problems I'd answer questions for him, advising him on the best way, for example, to get the job done in the time he was given to do the work.

FANG: What's your impression of his transformation scene?

BAKER: It's great. Naturally it's not exactly what I would have done; Rob took my ideas and added his own. In general, I think he did a better job than I thought he would, all of which made my job on *Werewolf* that much more difficult.

In retrospect, I feel sharing as much information was a big mistake on my part, and will lessen the impact of my transformation scene. It may seem like we're copying what Rob did. John Landis was pretty pissed off by it and has a right to be; I'm pissed at myself for it.

FANG: Has this caused a rift between you and Rob?

BAKER: Yes. I have to see Rob as competition now, and my most dangerous competition, because he knows exactly what I know and how I do things. In a way I'm competing against myself! We can't be as open with each other anymore; I have to protect myself.

On the other hand, I'm real proud of him. Look what he's accomplished at 21; it's pretty amazing.

FANG: How does *Werewolf*'s transformation scene compare with the one in *Howling*?

BAKER: It's a lot different and yet similar. It's much faster; we don't linger on the same effect over and over again as in *Howling*. I didn't end up using bladders on the guy's face, since *Altered States* and *Howling* both did that (I felt it was overdone in *Howling*).

Our scene starts with a naked man, so you immediately have more to show. He's in a brightly-lit room which also makes it very difficult; the lighting didn't help us one bit. *(Continued on page 39)*

David's dreams clash with reality as he is faced with a trio of mudering nazi demons (above), and the spectre of his dead friend, Jack (Griffin Dunne).

In our scene, it's very clear what's going on. There's a couple of times in *Howling* where, I felt, you saw something happening but couldn't tell what. In ours, you see his hand, then his hand changing; his legs and then his legs changing, and so on.

I'm not 100 percent pleased with the way our transformation was done; it's not the way I would have done it. In this business, I'm just one of many people involved in the creation of the final product. John and I had differences of opinion over how it should be photographed and staged. I would have put the film together differently, but I'm not the director. What disturbs me is that I've been in this business over ten years professionally, and I still have never had the freedom that Rob got on *Howling*. He was really lucky.

I did have a lot of freedom in the design of the characters, but that too was working with John's input: "I want the wolf to walk on all fours; kind of prehistoric and demonic, with big teeth." Within those guidelines I designed the wolf. The designs of the other make-ups were pretty much left up to me, since we were producing our stuff here and he was shooting in England.

FANG: Tell us about the other effects you did for *Werewolf*.

BAKER: We did the wolf, which is very different from *Howling*'s wolf. He doesn't walk on two legs, but on four. And that's about all John will allow me to say about the wolf; he really wants it to remain a mystery until it's seen in the film.

Then there's Jack, one of the two main male characters. Jack is the first werewolf victim; his throat is torn out. Jack continues to come back and haunt David, as one of the walking undead. Each time he returns he's worse for wear because he's starting to decompose. At the very last stage he's virtually some beef jerky on a skeleton. To achieve that effect, we made what you could call a puppet, but a very sophisticated one. We went from the actor's face and worked down. All you can

Another of David's dream-demons.

do make-up-wise to a real person is add, and we wanted to subtract. The puppet, based on the real actor's facial structure, allowed us to do that. Making a zombie puppet is something I've wanted to do since I was a little kid.

Then there's a number of dream sequences involving monsters. Also, there's a lot of make-ups of werewolf victims. The film's pretty bloody, but at least most of it is just blood. You don't see the wolf pulling meat off someone's side, but you do see a lot of blood. John's responsible for the blood. I didn't put any blood on anybody; John insisted on doing that himself! I was trying to talk the editor into cutting a reel of just John pouring blood on people; we must have an hour-and-a-half's footage of that! I think more blood was used on this film than on any other I've ever worked on.

I had a real good time making this movie, because some of it was stuff I'd always wanted to try. But again, it's always frustrating for me, because I'm designing something to be used in a certain way, and that's not always the way the director wants to see it used. And of course it's his film, so I have to go with what he says.

David, in danger of becoming a Rick Baker nightmare, tries to get arrested.

FANG: Would you like to direct your own film someday?

BAKER: No, it's too much work and I don't feel qualified. But I think I know how best to use the stuff I do. I'd like the opportunity Rob had in *Howling*: he designed the transformation to be shot in a certain way and they listened to what he had to say and did it his way. I think that's the reason his effects in that film work so well.

Don't get me wrong, though; I really like John Landis. He's one of the most interesting people I know. John is John; he's very strong-willed. So am I, and a lot of times during shooting I said to myself, "If John weren't my friend I'd kill him!" But I guess he has every right to be this way; after all, it's his movie.

FANG: How long were you working on the effects for *Werewolf*?

BAKER: We did about ten months of preproduction work, and another two or three months of shooting work. But we had a lot of interruptions during our preproduction work: the first three months we had no actors because of the actors' strike. So we did some designs and worked out the bugs of the change scenes. Then, when we got the actors, we took life masks and started working on those. Meantime, we were forced to change the location of our work studios, and that took about a month. So about four months of the preproduction time was hardly utilized.

FANG: Tell us about the people who worked with you on *Werewolf*'s effects.

BAKER: The effects were done by EFX, my company. I assembled a crew of people, mostly young, enthusiastic fans with whom I've corresponded over the phone and by mail. These guys did a lot of the work in *Werewolf*: they're very creative, talented people. Among them are Doug Beswick; he and I go back to my first work for *Octaman*. Then there's Steve Johnson, an amazing kid I met in Texas at a convention a few years back. And there's Tom Hester, Shawn McEnroe, Bill Sturgeon, and Kevin Brennan. They're all great.

And then, of course, there's Elaine Baker, who is our foam rubber technician.

FANG: How do you like working with your wife?

BAKER: I enjoy it—it's the only chance I really get to see her anymore, it seems. She assisted me for years before we got married, I used to test a lot of makeups on her and so on. Now she knows everything there is to know about foam latex, she's incredible.

FANG: Are you able to take her with you on location?

BAKER: The first location I've gone on since we've been married was England; I've just stopped taking location films. Elaine did go with me to England, and worked on the set with us—she's also the one who worked Sidney's face for *Shrinking Woman*, and she played the baby monster in *It's Alive*.

FANG: With all this talent at EFX, do you have a "next project" in the works?

PHOTO COURTESY OF RICK BAKER

EFX crew-members at work, from left: Kevin Brennan, Shawn McEnroe, Steve Johnson, Elaine Baker, Doug Beswick, Bill Sturgeon and Tom Hester.

BAKER: Right now we don't have a job but I'm keeping them on salary while we do research and development on a new process I called anatomation. It's not stop-motion; it's figures shot in real-time before the camera. A lot of it is based on the way human anatomy works, allowing me to take puppetry a step further. The Jack figure in *Werewolf* utilizes the basic principles of anatomation.

I've been developing the process for several years, and refined it further while working for Steve Spielberg on a film he was planning to shoot called *Nightskies*. This was to be a horror film with aliens. They all had their own personalities and had to be recognized, yet they were all of the same race. It was really an intriguing challenge. Steven said if the aliens didn't work the film wouldn't work. He said he didn't want to have any more aliens that had to be shot backlit in a smoke-filled room.

I told him from the first that it would be a very expensive film. After three months of producing the prototype alien he saw it and raved; he said it made Yoda look like a toy.

While continuing our research and development, we produced some storyboards, and based on those, submitted my final effects budget. I thought it was very reasonable, but he thought it was too expensive. After seeing the boards and realizing how many extraterrestrials we'd have to make to make the effects work, I think he got scared.

He then went on location to shoot *Raiders*, and by the time he returned, much of our sculpting work was already done. But he told us he'd changed the film's concept to involve only one alien, and couldn't use my design because it wasn't a horror film anymore; it was more like a Disney film! Well, I wasn't as interested in this version of the film, and it created major difficulties of scheduling with my *Werewolf* work. So we came to a parting of the ways.

PHOTO COURTESY OF RICK BAKER

Rick Baker at work, modelling the test-film mask for *The Howling*.

They're still talking about doing the movie, but not as it was originally envisioned. Ours was a horror film with threatening aliens. Now it's kind of a cute film with a nice little alien; it's totally different. The film I was working on, *Nightskies*, no longer exists. It's unfortunate, because I felt I did some of my best work ever, better than anything anyone's ever seen from me before.

FANG: Hopefully we'll at least see some of its concepts in your future work.

BAKER: These are really good times for people who do effects work. I've been doing this for a decade and this is by far the most lucrative time; I've never seen this many films with this many effects going on all at once. It used to be that you'd have to talk people into utilizing special make-ups; now they're coming up with things we can hardly do.

I'm real excited that there's so many people interested in make-ups who are so good at it. Right here at EFX I have six incredible talents. Rob is great and he has his own people. I've seen letters from kids all over the country whose work makes my early stuff look like shit! If this keeps up, we're going to see stuff like never before. Effects will make major advances, which hasn't happened in a long time. I'm really excited about the future.

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Zip_____

Chris Walas

The tale of a struggling make-up effects man who went from New World Pictures to Lucasfilms' ILM in just a year!

Walas sculpts the head Paul Freeman (inset) for his demise in *Raiders*.

PHOTOS: © 1981 Lucasfilm Ltd.

By BOB MARTIN

It's been an incredibly busy year for Chris Walas since our last feature on his work, one year ago (issue #7). For six months, we've been hounding the poor guy so we could do a follow-up to our previous coverage; but he's been so tied up, working incredibly long days at Industrial Light and Magic, Lucasfilm's San Francisco special effects lab, that it was only recently that his schedule allowed us to catch up with him for a leisurely talk.

Like many other makeup effects men before him, Chris started "messing up his face" at an early age, during his boyhood in Chicago, trying to emulate the creatures he'd seen on screen. And, like a lot of the other effects men we've spoken to, including Tom Savini and Rob Bottin, his first real lessons in makeup technology came from a little booklet by Dick Smith published by *Famous Monsters* magazine in the mid-60's and, tragically, never reprinted. "That book really has been a tremendous influence," says Walas, "The best aspect of that book was that it showed that a lot of things are really achievable by very simple means . . . for instance, telling you about the use of ping-pong balls and scotch-tape. And yet it went from very simple makeup techniques to such things as latex pieces, build-up and laying hair,"

Now that the Smith book—which quickly sold out—is no longer available, there really is no comparable single book that can wield a comparable influence on the next generation of makeup artist. "But, even so," says Walas, "I think that magazines like FANGORIA, CINEMAGIC, and all the others that keep cropping up are covering things awfully well, and really giving a lot of background information, so that, if a kid really wants to pursue it, the information is there. In a lot of ways the information available has actually improved, and materials are a lot more accessible. It's amazing that you can actually get supplies in a place like San Rafael; places that never used to carry the stuff, but so many kids have asked for it that they started carying it.

"But I bought two copies of that Smith book as soon as it came out, Warren sold out of them in no time; they became very precious items in Chicago," recalls Walas. And at the age of 13, Walas packed his two copies and joined his family in a migration to Parsippany, New Jersey.

At this point, some of you who read our Walas interview a year ago will expect us to say "and then Walas went to high school with Joe Dante." But the trouble is that such a statement would be untrue, and here we have to finally break down and tell you something we should have told you several issues ago. Jim Wynorski, the freelance writer who first interviewed Chris Walas, Rob Bottin and Bob Short for us, has an instinctive flair for dramatic embellishment. All of Jim's articles—except for his interview with Joe Dante, which was entirely rewritten by your editor—bear about the same relationship to the truth as the average TV docudrama. All the central aspects of the stories are true, but Wynorski shows a unique talent for livening up his interviews with half-true anecdotes and interesting-but-false details.

Wynorski's inaccuracies are generally about as harmless as the misinformation that Walas and Dante attended school together; Dante is actually five years older—Dante and Walas first met in Los Angeles, though they both did attend the same New Jersey high school. The "untruths" that appeared in Wynorski's FANGORIA articles are so closely wedded to facts that Bottin and Walas agree that it's simply impossible to correct them, which is why we've never corrected those particular errors. So why are we telling you all this now? We'll explain that later.

At any rate, it was in high school that Walas first started getting ambitious with

his makeup talents, applying them to the school's stage productions, and his own and other people's super-8 movies. Walas then attended college at Paterson State in New Jersey and L.A. City College, where he majored in film. "For the college theatricals, the makeup department was so much better supplied that I'd often wind up staying there late into the night," Walas recalls.

While at L.A. City, 3,000 miles from home, Walas ran out of money and, as a result, took a job that would determine the earliest stages of his film career. He went to work at Don Post Studios. "I worked there for about a year, and worked my way up from the very lowest job-level to being one of the lab-workers—there were just two of us there at the time, Bob Short and myself. The company, up until that time, had been taking on some smaller effects projects for TV and some movie work, which was what Bob and I were mostly interested in; then they decided to shy away from the effects work in order to concentrate on the mass production of masks. That's when Bob and I left."

Walas and Short were just planning on leaving the Post Studios when Phil Tippett and Jon Berg, who were devising effects for Joe Dante's *Piranha*, came for a tour of the lab, and to enquire if the Post Studios would contract to build the film's puppet fish-villains to their specifications. "Post decided they couldn't; Berg asked us if we wanted to work on it, and we sure did." says Walas.

"I had done some commercials, and some *Wonder Woman* TV shows, but it was the first movie that I worked on for any length of time. I'm glad it was this particular one, because I've never worked with so many wonderful people on a single movie since."

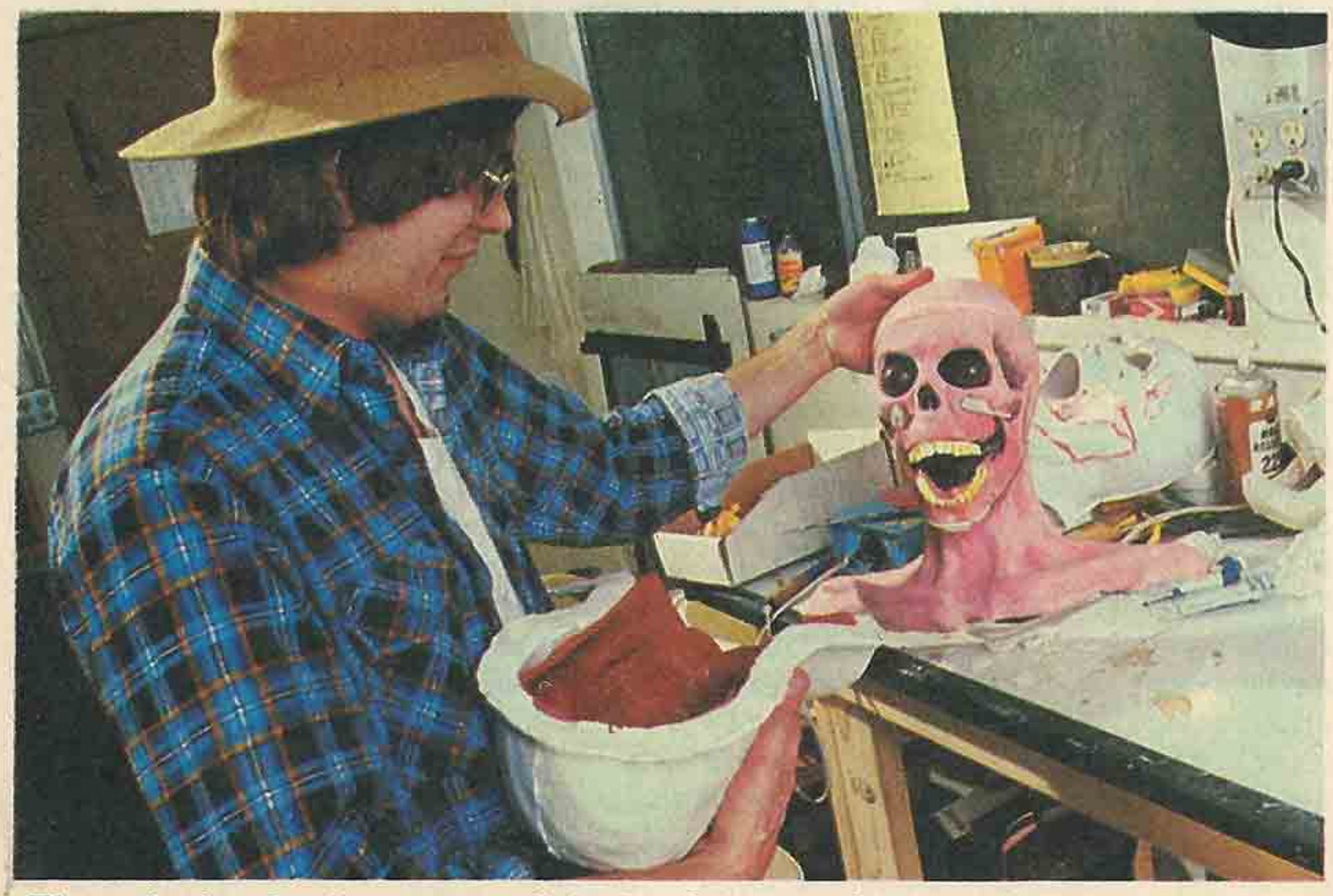
Short and Walas worked more-or-less as partners during the first months after *Piranha*, taking on a multitude of "little projects, some where people wanted an incredible amount of work in as little time as possible." Rock trivia fans might be interested to know that an early product of this relationship was the clear steering wheel clutched by the big-mouthed model

PHOTO: © 1981 United Artists

Walas' *Caveman* neanderthal.

on the cover of the first album by the Boston rock group The Cars.

The next couple of years brought Walas a great deal of employment from the folks at New World Pictures, always hungry for unknown effects talent. "I really can't remember half of the pictures I worked on for them, which is probably for the best," says Walas. One that particularly sticks in his memory is *Up From the Depths*, a ludicrous *Jaws* rip-off directed by Charles B. Griffith, who did a little better with *Dr. Heckle and Mr. Hype* a year later. "Actually, that was a fun picture to work on, and I took it because I enjoy working underwater," says Walas. "But it was a real tough shoot. One day we lost ten hours of shooting underwater. Ten hours of carrying big tanks of blood and equipment, lost. Later the same day, I was on my way home and came to the route five turn-off off of route 11, where somebody's painted a skull with a hat on it. I was so burnt-out, I was staring and driving straight at it. Luckily, Bob Short was in the car and told me to look out—just in the nick of time I came out of it.



The articulated substructure of the head seen on the opposite page.

PHOTO: © 1981 Paramount

Top: The "walking dragon"—armatures by Tom St. Armand, designed by Tippett and sculpted by Tippett with Walas. Above: *Screamers'* fisherman.

"It was a really demanding job, and one that offered almost no satisfaction in return," Walas comments. "I worked with Tom Burman for a couple of weeks once, after I'd been working in makeup for a couple of years; I told him that I wasn't sure I could stay with it, it's such a very demanding profession. Burman agreed with me that it is, indeed, a very demanding field; 'And you know,' he said, 'You never really get it all back.'"

While effects makeup men can derive a great deal of satisfaction from the actual process of makeup work itself, what becomes of that work is inevitably beyond their control. One case in point is Walas' work on *Isle of the Fishmen*.

Fishmen was a low-budget Italian monster movie, starring Barbara Bach and geared to the children's market, until it was picked up by New World for American distribution. Director David Drake, actors Cameron Mitchell and Mel Ferrer, and makeup effects man Chris Walas were all recruited to add new scenes to make it into an R-rated horror thriller, with a different title. Walas built an elaborate *Fishman* suit, following the design of the suits used in the original footage—only Walas' suit was well-crafted enough to be used in numerous close-ups without shattering the illusion that a real monster had been loosed upon the screen.

However, when New World test-marketed the film under the title *Something Waits in the Dark*, business was dismal. Something had to be done to turn the loser into a winner.

That something came from none other than Jim Wynorski. You see, back when we were just finding out that Wynorski's articles were not exactly accurate, we were just about to ask him not to bother writing for FANGORIA anymore, when he told us he *couldn't* write for us anymore. He would be too busy in his new job—Roger Corman had hired him as advertising director at New World Pictures.

It was a rather startling thing to learn, and yet remarkably appropriate. New World has never been known as a strong believer in truth-in-advertising. Yet, with Wynorski at the advertising helm, New World reached new pinnacles of—let's call it "creativity"—in their ads, particularly in the ads for *Isle of the Fishmen*, now retitled *Screamers*.

"WARNING: In this film you will actually see a man turned inside out" declare the ads, and, while the poster art depicts a rather neat-looking corpse, there is nothing in the film that remotely resembles the art or that fulfills that warning. Trailers and TV ads for the film even had scenes that appeared nowhere in the film (though this is not new for New World, it's never been done quite so blatantly as it is for *Screamers*).

"I worked with Barbara Bach on *Caveman,*" says Walas, "and she was quite upset to learn that they had taken this film that was made for a tremendously low budget as a kids' film, and decided to reshoot scenes in order to make a big horror film out of it, and I can hardly blame her.

"I've seen the *Screamers* campaign, and it's certainly one of the larger cases of false advertising to be seen in recent years. The TV spots they made for it have absolutely nothing to do with the film. I could go on for a long time talking about it, though I don't suppose there's much point."

Though *Screamers* has only recently hit the neighborhood screens, during the time that New World cooked up their "fishy" marketing strategy, Walas completed work on several major assignments that insure the worthiness of the Walas name. First among these was *Scanners*.

"It was a really good experience, working with Stephen DuPuis and Tom Schwartz, but it was a real tough one; we had a lot of problems with materials, because of the cold and the humidity. [David] Cronenberg is a great guy to work with, and he's very good at dealing with problems on the set; a great calming influence. For instance, I got there the day before we started shooting—which should tell you the kind of preproduction we had—and one of the first sequences to work on was the one where Stephen Lack has a dart shot into his hand. They had already taken casts of his hands, and one of the other guys told me the positioning of the hands and the angle when they were to take the dart. I mounted a nice little piece that would allow the skin to pull up when the dart was taken out, so it would really look like a dart in a hand. I took it onto the set and told Cronenberg how it worked—and he pointed out to me that he had asked for the dart to enter a different part of the hand entirely! I, of course, was floored, but fortunately Cronenberg was able to immediately figure how to change the angles of the shot, and make it work.

"The schedule was extremely tight; that

film was shot very quickly, and it was amazing to me that he was able to maintain an overview of how all the camera set-ups worked together, in terms of editing, after going through all these different camera set-ups in a single night."

We admitted to Walas that we hadn't seen the picture he'd worked on following *Scanners*, *Galaxina*. "That's all right," Walas told us, "I haven't seen it either, and I'm not sure I want to."

From what we had heard about *Galaxina*, however, we guessed that few demands had been made upon the scriptwriter or the director, while lavish demands were made of Walas. "Yes, very much so," Walas told us. "It was an amazing project. They wanted 40 creatures and expected all new designs; they originally had a six-week shooting schedule, and four or five weeks of preproduction—so all the creatures sort of blended together. I had two assistants, Ken Myers and Eric Jensen; I used every mold I had on hand, I borrowed every mold that Rob Bottin had lying around, borrowed a pair of hand molds from Rick Baker's *Incredible Melting Man*—I was asking favors of pretty much everybody to get that stuff done. The problem really arose when they cut their schedule from six weeks to four weeks, and asked that everything due in those last two weeks be delivered on the fifth day of shooting. There's an *ALIEN*-parody in there that develops into a child-sized creature, Angelo Rossito in a costume that we built overnight—the production manager called us up at three o'clock one afternoon to tell us it was due on the set at eight the next morning. Rossito was really nice about coming over to be fitted on such short notice. We were never really happy with the suit, but we were amazed that we were able to get it done overnight; and, of course, no matter how much we did, they always wanted more.

There was no break for Walas between *Fishmen* and *Scanners*, or between *Scanners* and *Galaxina*; still, somewhere in there, he managed to manufacture a mermaid's tail for a friend making an institutional film about diving safety. And, before another breath was taken, work began on *Caveman*.

"It started the same week that *Galaxina* was ending, and they wanted that suit in a rush. It came out real nice but it was a lot of work—I was functioning as a total maniac. We had about a month to get it done, which involved taking a cast of the actor, Richard Moll, having the base costume sewn up, having thousands of dollars worth of wigs being cut, dyed, trimmed and applied; all the individual pieces being sculpted; the mechanical arm extensions being made; and the face being made. The last proved to be quite a job, and it's unfortunate that not much of that shows in the film—it smiles, snarls, moves its brows. The week that we were going to have to shoot it turned out to be two days—one with the actors, and one day for all the inserts. It was one of those unfortunate situations where they had to finish the picture quickly because they were going to lose their studio space.

"When I arrived, they were already about a week behind schedule; and, naturally, as soon as I got off the plane in Mexico City I was so physically worn and susceptible that I garnered every imaginable bug floating in the air and felt tremendously ill the entire time."

Once again, Walas had his next job lined up before *Caveman* was completed. Jon Berg, who originally recruited Walas for the *Piranha* team, invited Walas to join Lucasfilm's Industrial Light and Magic to work on *Dragonslayer*. At first, Walas floated from department to department as needed, aiding Ken Ralston and Dave Carson in the design and construction of the baby dragons, working with Tom St. Amand on the "go-motion" armatures for the baby dragons. When Phil Tippett had to leave for England to supervise the painting of the full-sized dragon, Walas took over some of his sculpting chores, particularly on the walking dragon. "Phil got back before it was finished, and supervised my sculpting," says Walas, "and the final construction was done by Phil. He's much more familiar with maintaining scale, and the needs of the stop motion technique. I learned a lot from him."

Walas' main task on the film had not even existed prior to his membership on the Lucasfilm team. "They had hoped to get all the close-up shots from the full-size head; although they did get some really good shots, the director, Matthew Robbins, wanted to get some more character into it. I suggested that we do a smaller version of it, heavily mechanized. Phil supported me on that, and they took me up on it. We raced like hell to get that done; it was a tremendous amount of work, building a head that would operate from a combination of radio-control, pneumatics, cable control, some hand-operated levers, some air-bladders, all in a pretty confined space—the finished head stands about 16 inches high. The brows raise and lower, the eyes blink and move back and forth, the bridge of the nose wrinkles, the nostrils flare, the lip snarls, the mouth opens and closes, the tongue swells, the throat swells up, the gills flare, the temples bulge . . . It was not easy—especially since *Raiders* [*of the Lost Ark*] came in at about that time. Stuart Ziff was very helpful in designing some of the mechanisms that went into the dragon, and Erik Jensen helped a great deal in the operation of it. And, on both films, I received some excellent help from Wesley Seeds and Marc Thorpe."

As busy as Walas had been during the previous year, he now got even busier, "I worked a few weeks here and a few weeks there, and then back and forth on an almost daily basis. Some nights I was sleeping at ILM—and when I wasn't sleeping at ILM, I was awake at ILM. There were a lot of changes and a lot of trials on the *Raiders* heads, because George [Lucas] had originally envisioned them one way; Stephen Spielberg also saw ways that he wanted it done. The rating they wanted had not been decided yet, so we shot some pretty gruesome tests, particularly with the exploding head, which you can see behind the fire in the film. I think they took that take because you couldn't see all the red—it was unbelievably violent in the tests."

Originally, the "shriveling head" was articulated with an internal mechanism designed and built by Stuart Ziff, who had codeveloped the "go-motion" animation system with Phil Tippett. "The head was able to turn and nod and move around within the shot; I hooked up the jaw so that it could open and close. When George saw the tests, he decided that he wanted it to be very stiff, like a mummy drying out. We had to take it apart, remove the mechanism, and rebuild the support for it. I was a little disappointed, because I thought we had a pretty good effect there.

The greatest amount of work went into the "melting head." "We had to mix our materials extremely thin for these particular circumstances, so everything was extremely delicate." Walas tells us. "It was built up in layers—there was a skin layer, and all the muscles and veins, the entire substructure of the face built onto the skull.

"They shot it in time lapse, but it wound up being a little too long, so they stép-framed it [omitted some frames from the print]. There was also a frame or two with my hand in it—I was sitting underneath that thing making sure it all went properly."

Chris Walas, now working with the most prestigious effects organization in film, and with major contributions to this summer's two biggest movies now on screen, has certainly achieved a lot in the last year. His goals for the next year are even more ambitious. As we mentioned earlier, Walas was a film major in college—he never fully intended to make a career of makeup effects, and has a much greater interest in the director's role. "Makeup was simply the most accessible way for me to make an entry into film." he says. "Recently, I've been working on a story that has some interesting makeup and effects work in it, that hopefully I will now have some time to sell. It's a horror film—not a graphic horror film, more of an implied graphic horror film. And, just like everybody and his brother, I hope to direct it. I think it's a very interesting package, I've got a real good cameraman and some other production people I'd like to get involved in it. It can be made for a low budget, and I've worked in so many low-budget films, that I pretty much know the ins and outs of such productions."

Of course, as Walas indicates, everybody in L.A. wants to direct, and not that many movie ideas ever actually get off the ground . . . but then, who ever thought that Chris Walas would go from *Isle of the Fishmen* to *Raiders of the Lost Ark* in a single year?

That's progress!

Stephen King and Collaboration

By STANLEY WIATER

Providence, Rhode Island—the birthplace of H.P. Lovecraft—seems the appropriate town in which to hold a gathering of artists, writers and filmmakers specializing in fantasy and the macabre: the Fifth World Fantasy Convention. Stephen King was here as Guest of Honor; George Romero arrived to make an appearance on a panel discussing "The Modern Horror Film." The result—an opportunity for the fans (and FANGORIA readers) to meet two giants of modern terror.

Considering the popular and critical acclaim both men have received for their work in their respective media, it's not surprising to learn that the two are mutual admirers. King, at age 32 the best-selling author of horror tales in the world, was dressed at the time in a T-shirt bearing the legend "#1" in recognition of the placement of his newest novel, *The Dead Zone*, at the top of *The New York Times*' best-seller list.

George Romero is a tall, barrel-chested man in his mid-40s, and was dressed even more casually in work shirt and blue jeans. Full bearded—as King sometimes is on his books' dust jackets—Romero could very well pass as a gym instructor at the same school where King used to be an English teacher. Neither men give any outward sign of being overwhelmed by their enormous critical and financial successes in the field.

What did excite the pair were their own plans to work together on *two* major film projects, one an adaptation of King's ambitious novel *The Stand*, the other a film collection of short horror tales in the style of E.C.'s horror comics of the 1950s titled *Creep Show*. Little more can be said of the latter— King had left all copies of *Creep Show* at his home in western Maine!

According to King, "The thing about [horror] films is that there are as many good ones as there are. You wouldn't think there would be; there's such a tendency to play safe, isn't there?" He laughs when Romero asks for the screenplay to *Creep Show*: "I am very embarrassed about that, because the screenplay's all done and it's sitting on the dresser! It's just like show biz." In regards to the filming of *The Stand*, King continues: "I guess I never really had considered *The Stand* as a movie, seriously. Then George and Richard [Rubenstein, Romero's producer] came up; they were out in Hollywood after doing *Dawn of the Dead* and talking to people. And they kept saying, 'What about *The Stand*?' And people would say, 'You can't do that, it's huge! And George and Richard would say, 'But have you read it?' And they'd say, 'No, but it's huge!' This is a ridiculous way to approach a project for a movie. So you have to wonder if they [the studios] are reading at all.

"What the studios balked at essentially is this: *The Dead Zone* is a one-character book. There's a guy named Johnny Smith, and he *is* the book; everything revolves around him. He is the story, and everything around him is the setting for that story. But *The Stand* has no essential hero. There's Stu Redman, there's Nick Andros, there's all these other people. And they said, 'You've got all these people—you can't handle it [on film].' But on the other hand, [Francis Ford] Coppolla did that with *The Godfather*."

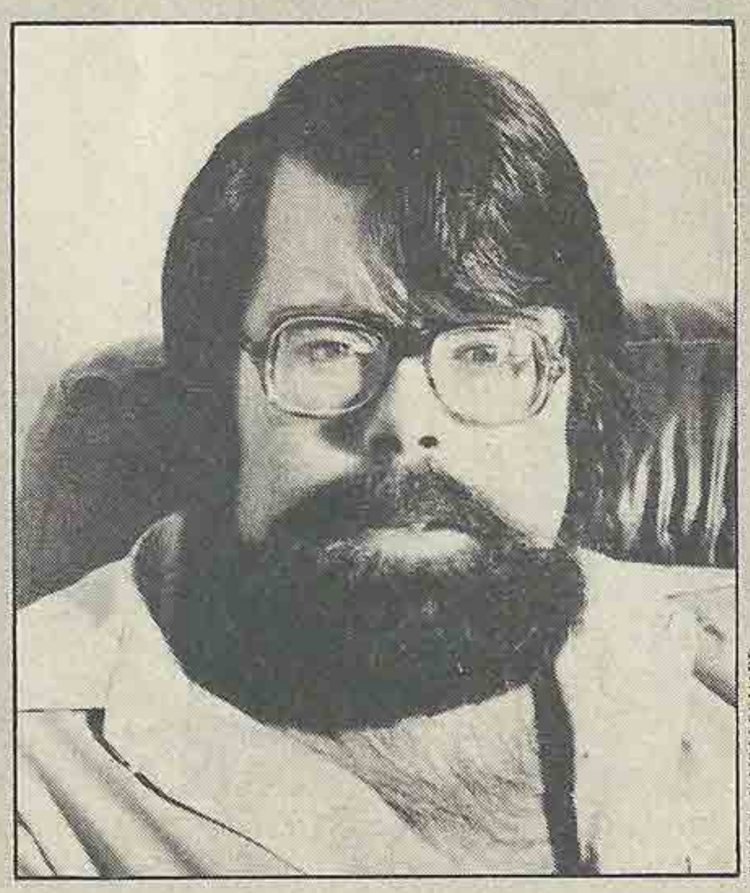


PHOTO JAMES LEONARD

CENTER PHOTOS KATHERINE KOLBERT ©1978 DAWN ASSOCIATES

King, far left, and Romero, the bearded behemoths of fright, and their recent masterworks

A Horrific Collaboration

Leaning back in his chair, Romero constantly nods in agreement with King's statements. Their collaboration is certainly logical in one sense: King's stories and novels are known for having the most unspeakable terrors taking place among the people next door, in Anyplace, U.S.A. While all of Romero's films, no matter how outré the subject matter—ghouls, biological warfare, vampires—all have taken place in the same mundane and most ordinary of surroundings. The settings for *Night of the Living Dead, Dawn of the Dead, The Crazies, Martin*—small towns and cities on the East Coast—differ little, except by name, from the basically ordinary settings of King's novels.

"That's why I'm attracted to a lot of Steve's stuff," Romero readily admits. "I also find in *The Stand* a lot of social significance, if you will. Although on the surface, we're just out to make a movie." And what sort of horror directly appeals to Romero as a writer/director? "It's hard to pinpoint, it's such a personal thing. I like it to have a certain kind of logic, and a certain kind of craft. And a certain integrity to the form—to the genre. I tend to be a little more outrageous and a little more—I know it sounds cliche—socio-political. *The Crazies* is very political, up front. But even with the *Dead* films there's a socio-political underbelly to them. I like things like that, and I like satire. I really haven't tried to make a 'scary' movie since *Night of the Living Dead*—none of the others are really scary movies."

Romero explains that to the viewers who found *Dawn of the Dead* to be no longer frightening after the first 10 minutes, that this was precisely the point when he first planned the film. "*Dawn of the Dead* isn't a scare film. It's a *shock* film. It's a satire, and to me is funny. It's in the genre, but it's not in pure form. Neither is *Martin*. In fact, none of them are, except for *Night of the Living Dead*, which, while it has a socio-political-philosophical underside to it, on the sur-

face it's a pure horror film. And even *Dawn* on the surface is still just a movie. It's just not a scary *horror* movie."

Studio Backing

Although Romero has made his reputation as sort of a maverick, producing his films without major studio backing, the success of *Dawn of the Dead* finally has the studios seeking him out. Yet Romero is hesitant as to what sort of creative control might be lost by gaining either a large financial backing or a solid distribution package for *The Stand*. Although he did not mention anyone by name, Romero cited several examples of young, independent directors who were hired by a major Hollywood studio to do films, had one box-office failure and were never heard from again. Overall, he's still optimistic about his own chances.

"I'm very excited about *The Stand*. We're going to try to produce that with or without a studio's involvement. There might be some studio involvement up front, but it's a lot different when you go to a studio and say, 'This movie's going to cost $10 million,' and you already have six. And getting that first six doesn't involve the studios at all." But Romero does foresee major studio involvement at some point in his career, either with a project he has brought to Hollywood, or with a project the established studios wish him to direct.

"*The Creep Show* is an anthology; I think one part was originally a short story, but whether it was previously published or not I don't know because I haven't seen the script! Steve and I just had a couple of very broad conversations, just kind of respecting each other's jobs, in regards to what each of us is going to do. And Steve just said, 'Terrific, and I'll see you again when it's ready.' I really look forward to reading it, even though I know what it's like, what it's intended to be."

Hopes for Screen Credit

It's hoped that a credit which reads "Screenplay by Stephen King" will be appearing eventually on the screen. *Carrie* and *'Salem's Lot* were both adapted by Paul Monash, while Stanley Kubrick rejected King's screenplay of *The Shining* for his own version. Nor has a screenplay sold to NBC television from the *Night Shift* collection gone much beyond the preproduction stage. Yet being the prolific writer that he is, FANGORIA was not too surprised to learn that King has still other screenplays in the hands of independent producers.

"Last winter," King says, "a group of guys from Maine expressed interest in a screenplay I wrote, *Children of the Corn* (from a story in *Night Shift*). It seemed to them that it could be made into a movie. They're a very small group called Varied Directions, and the guy who will be directing it is named David Hoffman, who's done a lot of stuff for public television. Basically, the problem with the major studios was that they looked at this thing and said, 'You know, this is no good because it'll be a low-budget picture. What we want from you is something *big*, a big picture. Their idea is that if you make a picture, it's got to cost $7 million if you're going to make $20 million.

"So they [Varied Directions] were really having trouble finding backing for a film they estimated would take a million dollars to make. It'll be very low budget—it'll be all exteriors, all unknowns. That's the way it was always planned. So, in the midst of all this, comes [John Carpenter's] *Halloween*, and *Dawn of the Dead* and a lot of other pictures. *Dawn of the Dead* is just the opposite of *Prophecy*; it's a $2-million picture that looks like a $12-million picture. And all at once this opens up, and they've got their financing. They're going to Iowa next year to shoot the picture. But this crazy idea that if you don't spend a lot of money you're not going to get something good . . . ." King shakes his head in bewilderment.

First Love

Both men have long been in love with horror movies; it's a love that dates back to their childhood days. Nonetheless, King thinks *Prophecy* "was a $12-million film that looks like [John] Frankenheimer made it for half a million dollars. It was not just a turkey—it looked *cheap*. But I saw it three times." He laughs. "If you love horror movies, you've got to have a love for pure *shit*. This is not an aspersion on anyone in this company, but you turn into the kind of person who would watch *Attack of the Crab Monsters* four times. You know how shitty it is, but there's something that appeals to you. It doesn't mean you don't want to do better."

Romero admits he too went to *Prophecy* expecting a lot more than was delivered, and felt that he had to go see it because it was produced by a major studio. Elaborating on his earliest influences, Romero states, "When I was growing up in the 1940s, genre movies were what were around . . . the double-bills on weekends. But I loved all the genre movies—jungle movies, war movies. And horror movies were *it*. The first one that I think had a real influence on me was Howard Hawk's *The Thing*, which I carried around for a couple years in my psyche. Roman Polanski's work has had an affect on me, too. I'll say the same thing Steve said: I like to watch 'junk.' I *do* like to watch it, and I'll always opt for that. Always. Some people forget that's what movies are: a popular form. And enjoyment is at the heart of the form."

George Romero: in TERROR

—Romero's film *Dawn of the Dead*, and King's novel *The Stand*.

Stephen King: Living in "Constant, Deadly Terror"

By DAN CHRISTENSEN

The author of such horror epics as Carrie *and* 'Salem's Lot *talks of his visit on the set of Stanley*

Let's talk, you and I. Let's talk about fear.

"The house is empty as I write this; a cold February rain is falling outside. It's night. Sometimes when the wind blows the way it's blowing now, we lose power. But for now it's on, and so let's talk very honestly about fear. Let's talk very rationally about moving to the edge of madness . . . and perhaps over the edge."

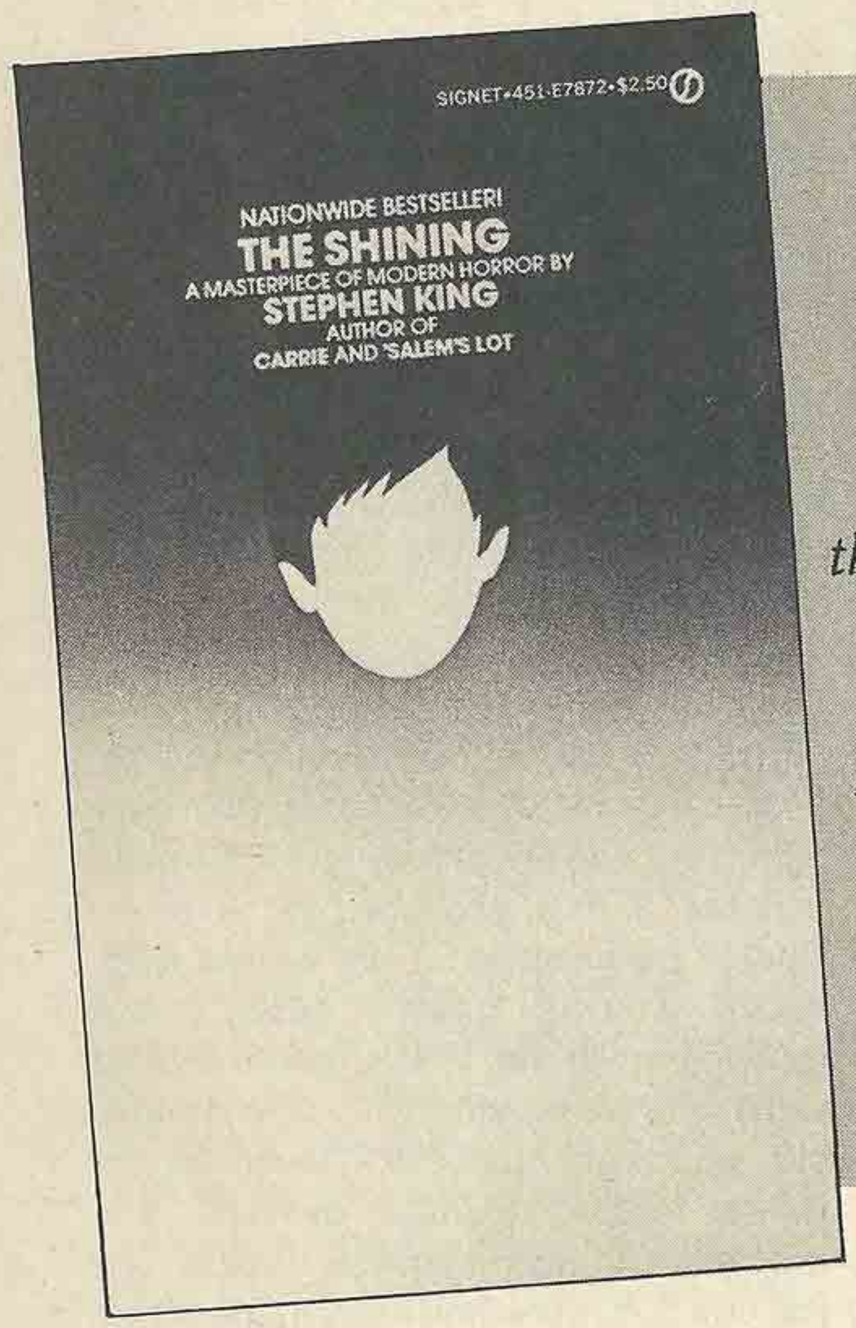
So begins Stephen King, modern-day master of horror, in the forward to his book *Night Shift*, a collection of short stories. Fear . . . it's a subject King knows a great deal about.

In *Night Shift*—as well as in his first four highly successful novels: *Carrie*, *'Salem's Lot*, *The Shining*, and *The Stand*—King explores the genre's body of often-cliched themes as an anatomy teacher might dissect a fresh corpse: methodically and skillfully, yet with the inevitable bloodstains.

Now, at age 32 and firmly established in the prime of his writing career, King, who lives in western Maine, has become one of Hollywood's most sought after talents. His first book, *Carrie*, later was adapted for director Brian DePalma's stunning movie, and King's third book, *The Shining*, is now being completed by Stanley Kubrick, director of *A Clockwork Orange* and *2001: A Space Odyssey*. Likewise, plans have been announced to capture *'Salem's Lot*, a chilling tale of vampire infestation in New England, into a four-hour, two-night mini-series for CBS-TV next season.

For a while, there were even thoughts of developing King into a latter day Rod Serling as the host of his own series based on the stories in *Night Shift*, but King, a private man, nixed that idea.

Of all the film activity surrounding his work, however, none is as promising, or intriguing, as Kubrick's handling of King's novel of psychic possession, *The Shining*, starring Jack Nicholson, Shelley Duvall, Scatman Crothers and newcomer Danny Lloyd. In England, where most of the filming was done, a shroud of mystery has prevented all but the barest essentials of Kubrick's plans to escape to the public.



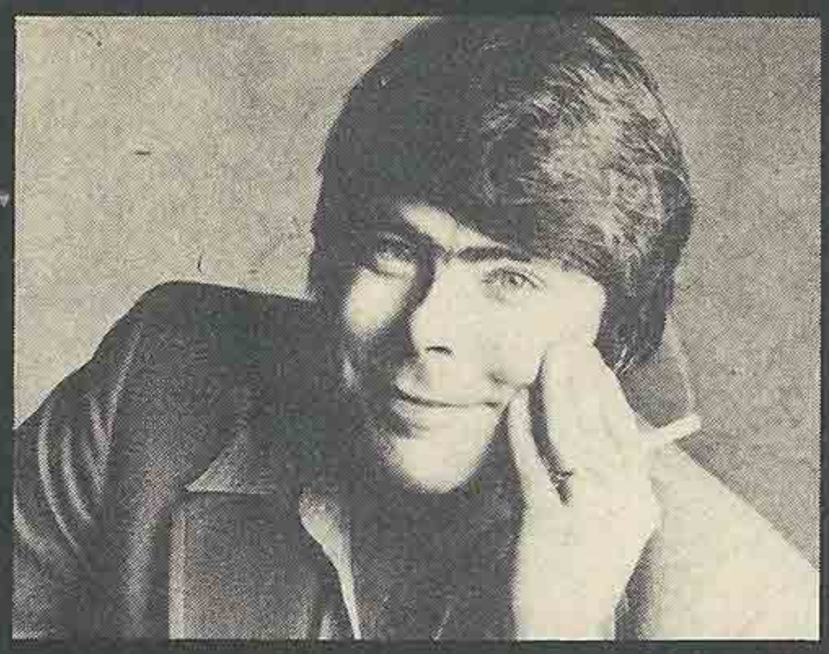
". . . Suppose that there is indeed a spirit world. What would happen if this kid's power was drawing spirits like a magnet draws filings, making them stronger until they took on their own sentient life?"

On "The Shining" Set

On a recent rip to Elstree Studios to find out more about the film for himself, King, who though he had no part in the movie, managed to lift the veil of secrecy a bit, and in a seires of exclusive interviews with FANGORIA, talk about what he saw on the set of *The Shining*:

"I got out to the set the second to last day of shooting and I got a chance to look around. The security was extremely tight; there was everything but guard dogs around the place. I didn't see any rushes, but I saw some lovely Kodachrome stills of the set, as it was at the time they were shooting everything. It looked incredible! The hotel (The Overlook) looks like something out of *2001*. It's so big it beggars description.

"The one still that sticks in my mind is one of the hotel lobby. It's just huge, and [Kubrick's] got a trick of perspective so that things look even bigger than they are. The little boy in the book, Danny, is on his tricycle in the lobby. He looks so small. The feeling you get is one of this gigantic hotel that swallowed this kid. Just the still is extremely ominous, which bodes well, I think, for the film.



Kubrick's The Shining—*another of King's tales of terror.*

"The sets are fantastic," King continues. "What they've done is put down thousands and thousands of bags of industrial salt; it looks like snow and feels like snow underfoot, except that it's warm. I understand from Stanley that they went up to Washington State and filmed a lot of second-unit stuff up there in some national park and basically came back and recreated the skyline on the back lot at the studio in England. It's like going through a little door into the U.S. right there in England. They've brought in the pine trees and everything, and the skyline stands behind the hotel, so it's really perfect.

"By the time I got there Nicholson and Duvall were gone. They were finishing up filming a scene from the book where Halloran [Scatman Crothers] goes from Denver up to a town called Sidewinder where he gets a snowmobile from a guy who runs a garage. Apparently, they [Kubrick's crew] saw the gas station that they wanted somewhere in Alaska and took a lot of photographs of it. They've reproduced the thing entirely on the set. Stanley said that if the guy ever goes to see the film he's going to be the most surprised gas station owner on Earth."

Ugly Rumors

During most of the filming of *The Shining*, rumors abounded that Kubrick planned to scrap large portions of the book (he had already scrapped King's screenplay version), including the ending, in favor of his own concepts. Whether those rumors grew as a consequence of the film's strict secrecy, or because Kubrick opted to use his own screenplay, is unclear. But according to King, the film and novel will end up nearly parallel.

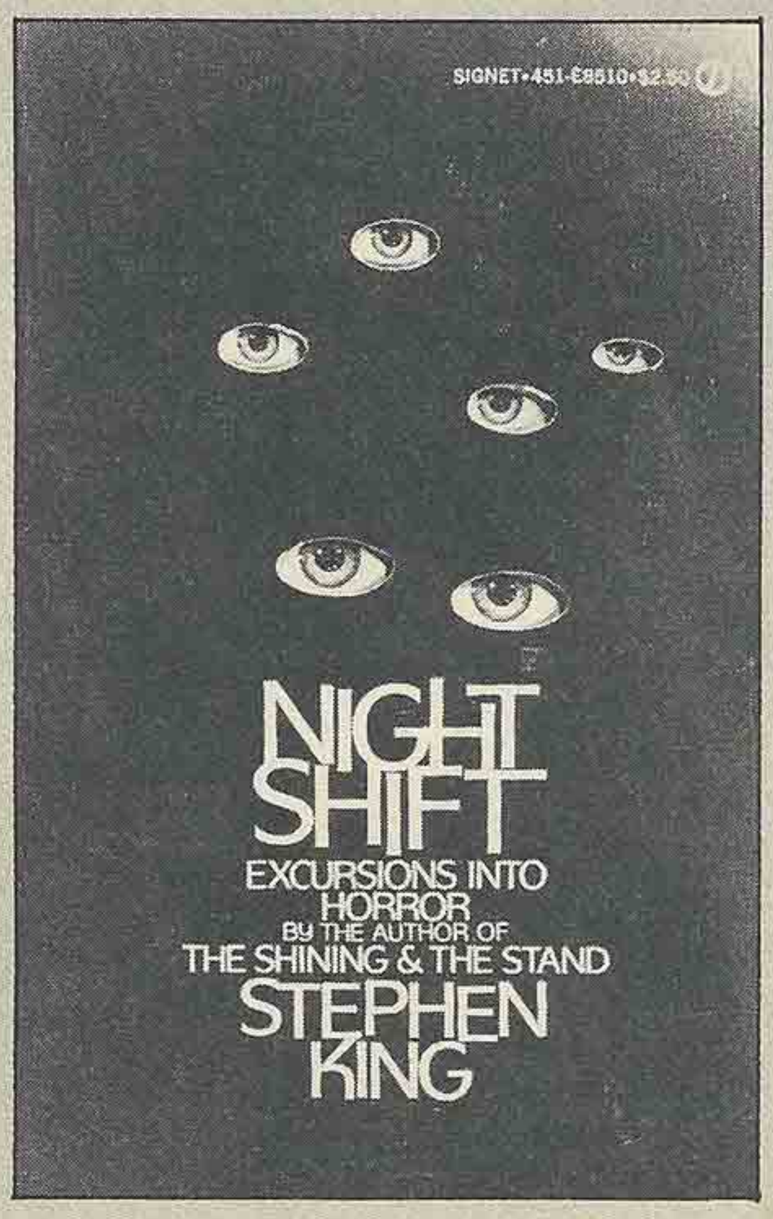
"I asked Stanley how closely he was following the plot and he said extremely closely. There are going to be some minor changes, but nothing substantial. In terms of plot, it's going to follow the book very closely, whether or not it's going to follow the book in spirit is some-

King on "'Salem's Lot"

In *Night Shift*, Stephen King published two short stories that added to the vampire mythos in *'Salem's Lot*. The first, "Jerusalem's Lot," was actually the initial story about the legendary Maine town and was written while he was still in college. The second, "One for the Road," was a sequel to the novel.

Currently, King is mulling over the idea of doing a full-fledged sequel to *'Salem's Lot*, his favorite book. Here, for the first time, he expresses his thoughts on the project:

"When I wrote 'One for the Road' I knew that things weren't over in Jerusalem's Lot, the same way that I know they aren't over now. I think about a sequel a lot. I even know who would be in it and how it would launch . . . it's Father Callahan. I know where he is. People ask me, 'You see Father Callahan go off on that Greyhound bus; what happened to him?' Well, I know what happened to him. He went to New



York City and from New York he drifted across the country and he landed in Detroit. He's in the inner city and he's running a soup kitchen for alcoholics, mostly black, and he's been attacked a couple of times and he's been in the hospital and people think he's crazy. He doesn't wear the turned-around collar anymore, but he's doing this anyway and he's trying to get right with God. So one day this guy comes in. He's dying and he says, 'I have to talk to you, Father Callahan.' And Callahan says, 'I'm not a Father anymore and how did you know that?' Finally, the guy is actually dying and coughing up blood and the last thing he says as he grabs Callahan by the shirt and pulls him down into this mist of beer and whiskey and puke and everything else is, 'It's not over in the Lot, yet.' Then he drops dead. So that's when it starts and Callahan realizes that if he's going to get right he has to go back and do it there; that he can't do it in Detroit saving bums. He's got to do it where he got wrong with God. I even know how the book ends, but I just don't know what the transmission of it all is. Something's got to run it and it can't be vampires. The vampires have got to figure in it, but that can't be the major thing. Someday it'll come to me and I'll write it."

thing else again," King admits.

Exactly what Kubrick has in store in the way of special effects is equally as sketchy. "I don't know much, but I've heard that they had done a life-sized head of Jack Nicholson that at some point was going to split open and spill out worms. I do know that there are not going to be any of the hedge animals that move. Apparently, Kubrick's replaced it with a hedge maze and I think from the way things sound that he's updated The Overlook considerably. I saw it as kind of a grand old manor. But I understand that there is one sequence in the movie where Danny goes into this game room that's full of electronic games. Apparently, Kubrick assembled every advanced kind of electronic game in England and put them in this room; when the kid comes in they all come to life. I don't see a whole lot of potential in that myself, though," says King.

The excising of the menacing topiary animals from Kubrick's work removes one of the most effective scare tactics in the book. Apparently, even special-effects master Kubrick couldn't pull it off.

"He wanted to put it in. It wasn't that he didn't like the idea, but he went to a lot of special-effects people in England and Europe and they said they could make the hedge animals move, they just couldn't guarantee that they'd look realistic enough to satisfy Kubrick's need for perfection," observes King.

"From that it seems clear that Kubrick is obviously a man who is in control of what's going on there." says King "He looks tired, but he seems happy and he seems pleased with what he was getting. He didn't seem nervous or autocratic or anything else."

Casting Doubts

If the author has any serious doubts about the film version of his book, they seem to be in the casting. King notes, "I'm a lot more dubious about Kubrick's casting of *The Shining* than I ever was about any of the people in *Carrie*. I always saw in my own mind Wendy Torrance as a kind of middle-intelligence, beautiful piece. Shelly Duvall just looks sort of nervous and overbred. And I always saw Jack Torrance as a tall, dark-haired man, not the Nicholson type at all; not flamboyant, almost withdrawn. I had someone like Martin Sheen in mind. But nobody will talk about that sort of thing in preproduction. What they want to talk about is someone who's bankable—and Nicholson is that. He'll be interesting as Jack Torrance, though."

King's reservations about Scatman Cruthers as Dick Halloran seem less severe, but that may be because he is less familiar with him. "At first I'd heard Halloran was going to be played by Ben Vereen and then I heard Kubrick had a specific white actor in mind, but apparently he couldn't get him. Who knows?"

While *The Shining* was originally scheduled for release later this year, production problems, including an electrical fire that destroyed The Overlook Hotel set with three weeks of shooting still to go, have pushed back its opening until at least the winter of 1980.

King, for one, sees at least a bit of irony in that. "It's sort of funny because The Overlook burns down at the end of the book and the hotel that the book was based on in Estes Park, Colorado, also burned down last year, I'm told.

"The fire on the set of *The Exorcist* was sort of suspicious in origin; whether it was spirits or whether it was just plain old arson, I don't know. This one was pretty definitely a faulty electrical cable—which they like fine because it means they'll collect their insurance," King says.

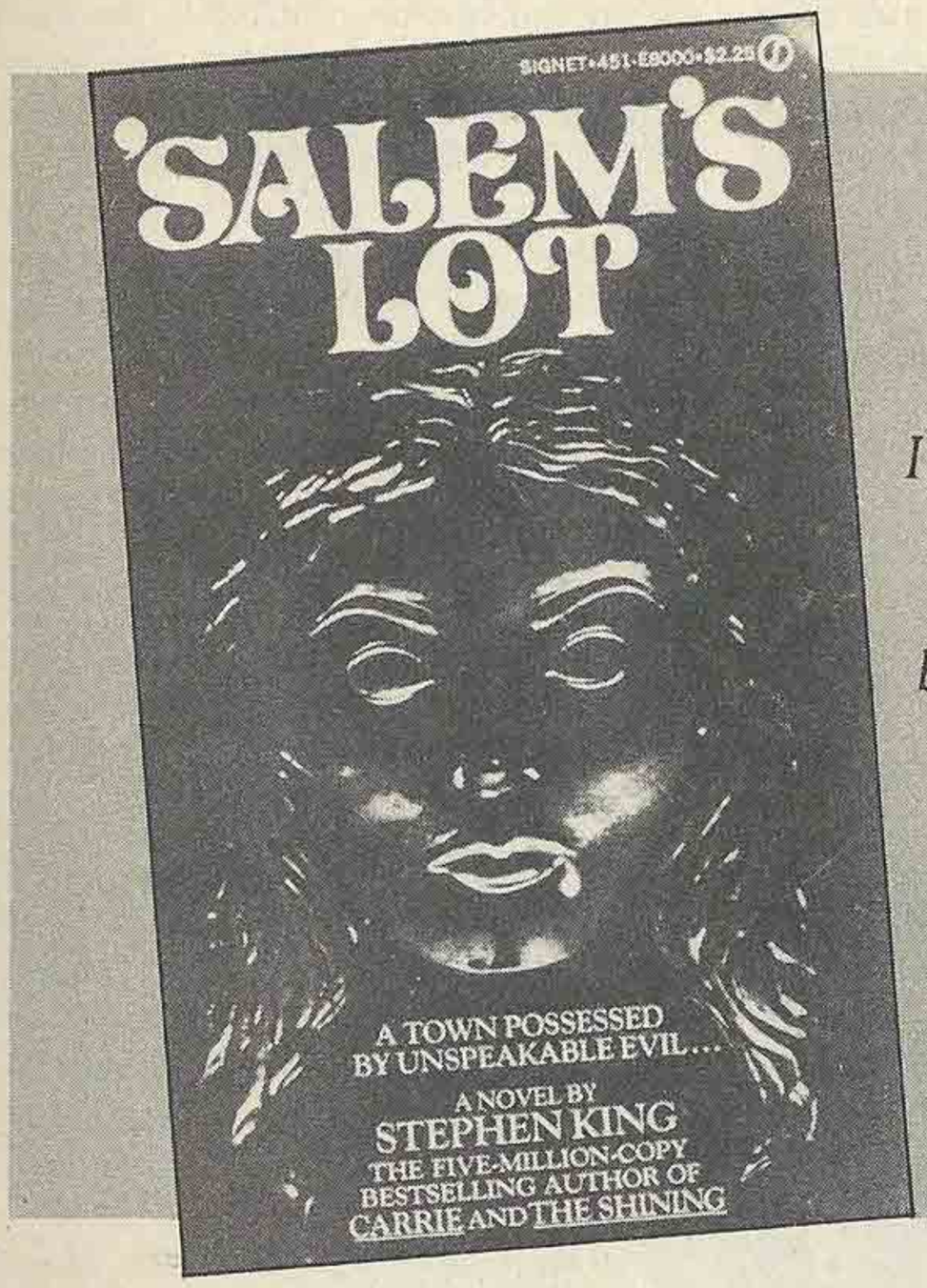
Oddly enough, King's inspiration for *The Shining* came while he and his wife, Tabitha, stayed at The Overlook's real-life counterpart in 1974. In what proves to be an insight into how he works, he describes part of his stay:

At The Overlook

"Being there was the real impetus. Things come to me like situations and they just sort of float around and then, sooner or later, you see a hook that you can hang that situation on. What I've always done as a writer when I've had an idea for a novel is sort of carry the novel around until I find a place to hang it up. And I had this idea for a novel about a kid who was a psychic receptor. I said to myself, 'He's a psychic, fine, we all know about psychics and what they're supposed to be able to do, but suppose that there is indeed a spirit world. What would happen if this kid got into a situation where his own power was drawing spirits like a magnet draws filings, and making them stronger until they began to take on their own sort of sentient life?'

"Tabby and I had heard about this hotel and somebody said we ought to spend a night there. So we went. It was in October, the last night of their season there. The hotel was totally deserted except for us. We went down to dinner and these waiters in tuxedos were coming over and playing it up. We had the only table that was occupied; the other ones were all covered with clear plastic drop-cloths with the chairs turned over on top of them. There was also an orchestra playing to this empty dining room. The whole scene was really spooky and I said, 'This is it!'"

About a year after *The Shining* was released, King says he got a letter from the hotel's manager. "He said that room 217 (home to the terrifying ghost of a dead woman) was booked up all



". . . It's not over in the Lot yet. I think about a sequel a lot. The vampires will figure in it, but that won't be the major thing. Someday it'll come to me and I'll write it."

through the season and that people kept stealing the brass nozzles of their firehose. I found that interesting."

Translating that kind of audience feeling to motion picture won't be easy, but King remains optimistic that Kubrick can pull it off. Unfortunately, he is less happy about NBC's plans for *'Salem's Lot*.

"I'm not terribly anxious for it to happen after what NBC did to [Thomas Tryon's] *Harvest Home*, King says. "They really screwed that up."

Romero: "A Genius"

At one point, he had hoped his friend, director George Romero (*Night of the Living Dead*), would do *'Salem's Lot*. "But it won't happen. George won't work with those people and I don't blame him. He and I have talked over some possibilities and we are going to talk some more. Sooner or later I hope he and I will do something together. I'm particularly interested in him because I think he's a genius. I saw *Martin* and it's a knockout. I'm scared to see his new one [*Dawn of the Dead*]."

As another NBC project, King has written the screenplay for a movie titled *Night Shift*, but he doesn't expect that to get off the ground either. "I assume that if they had definitely decided to put the project on the front burner I would have heard by now and I haven't," he says.

If *Night Shift* turns out to be stillborn as a film, then *The Stand*, his 823-page

Brian de Palma's *Carrie*. Will Kubrick's *The Shining* be the *2001* of shock films?

end-of-the-world vision, won't even be conceived as one.

"There won't be anything there," he says. "It's too long. It's too downbeat for television and too long for the movies. Movies have this kind of keyhole. Somebody like Francis Coppola in *Godfather* and *Godfather II* can stretch that keyhole to maybe three hours and 20 minutes. But on the other hand, Kubrick himself tried to stretch the keyhole with *Barry Lyndon* and failed—though triumphantly, from my point of view."

Despite the disappointment some may feel about his reluctance to turn *The Stand* into a film, it's clear that *The Shining* will not be the last of King's novels to be produced. Today, there are close to 10 million copies of his books in print. With his new works, *The Dead Zone*, and *Different Seasons*, to be a collection of four short novels, that total is sure to climb quickly.

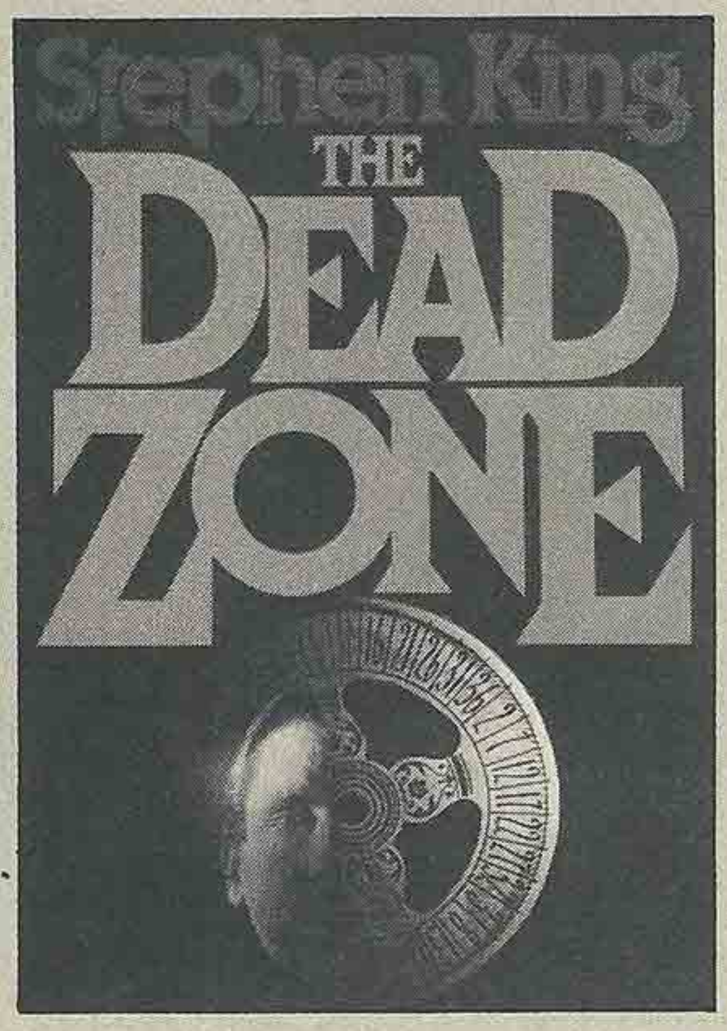
Despite the hype and praise surrounding him—he's been hailed as an emerging Lovecraft—King remains remarkably self-effacing. A solid, middle-class figure who drives an "outer-spacey" Yamaha 650 motorcycle and lives comfortably with his wife and three children, he belies the image of the horror writer who is, to use the words he penned for a 1977 magazine article, living in "constant, deadly terror."

"You've got to remember I wrote that line because it sounded really good. But I think that the person who writes this sort of fiction is always in danger of having his imagination go out of contol. It happens, it happens a lot. Take Sylvia Plath, or H.P. Lovecraft or some others—a lot of them had a real problem keeping their imaginations under control. That's what I meant in the introduction to *Night Shift* when I said that the knife can turn in your hand and cut you. You can jump at a lot of shadows that aren't there and I don't just mean supernatural things. Your mind tends to leap to the worst possible conclusion of anything you're involved in.

"I'll give you an example," King says. "Oddly enough, the fiction editor of *Maine Magazine* was a guy named Gunnar Hansen, who played Leatherface in *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre*. He's a nice, gentle man, but it was very funny to see him holding my small son. There was old Leatherface holding him on his lap and bouncing him up and down. I even felt a little nervous about that." 🐺

King on "The Dead Zone"

Stephen King's newest book, *The Dead Zone*, was published in August. It's the story of Johnny Smith, a New England schoolteacher who possesses dormant "low-grade precognitive powers" as the result of an auto accident he had as a child. King picks up what happens from there:



"On October 30, 1970, he takes his girlfriend to the last carnival of the year and he has a run of luck at one of the carny wheels of fortune. On the way home that night he's in a bad accident. He's in a coma for four and a half years. When he comes out of the coma in 1975 he's like a modern Rip Van Winkle; things have changed a lot. He begins to pick up on his powers now, but they don't bring him anything but misery. He's involved in a vicious murder case in a Hurkos-type way. Then, during the 1976 political campaign, he shakes hands with a man running for the House of Representatives. He gets a flash that he will someday become the President and push the button that destroys the whole world. From that, the question arises as to how he's going to handle it."

I Create the Body Cosmic

Make-up King Dick Smith talks about the creation of Altered States' *amazing effects and all the problems along the way.*

By ED NAHA

"We've created a lot of new, marvelous innovations for this movie. We've done things on this picture that I really thought would be impossible to do."

The speaker is Dick Smith and, in contemporary movie circles, he is just the man to call on when a film needs to make the impossible possible. One of the most inventive makeup artists in the history of cinema, it was Smith who changed innocent Linda Blair into the raving demon in *The Exorcist*, who turned Dustin Hoffman into the wizened, old *Little Big Man* and who choreographed Robert DeNiro's bloody antics in *Taxi Driver*.

This month, it is Dick Smith who will take a human being through several stages of genetic transformation in the eyebogging film *Altered States*. Based on the 1978 novel by playwright Paddy Chayefsky, *Altered States* is the story of scientist Edward Jessup (William Hurt), a man obsessed with the origin of humanity. Conducting a number of experiments using mind-bending drugs in conjunction with extended stays in water-filled isolation tanks, Jessup attempts to find a connecting thread between modern man and his primitive ancestors. He finds the emotional link but, in doing so, sets off a mental trip wire that actually alters his physical state of being. During the course of the story, Jessup metamorphoses violently; alternating between a primitive form and a being half human and half cosmic energy.

When producer Howard Gottfried and director Arthur Penn brought the project to Columbia Pictures in 1978, they knew that, if anyone could physicaly create Chayefsky's strange transformations on the screen, makeup expert Smith could. Penn had already witnessed the extent of Smith's magic in the box office hit *Little Big Man* a decade earlier. Smith was contacted by the director and the struggle to bring *Altered States* before the cameras began.

For a while, the drama behind the scenes was more intense than anything found in the script. Sitting in his upstate New York home, Dick Smith recalls the confusion and craziness which led to one of his most ambitious projects to date. "It all started quite innocently enough," he says with good-natured humor, "they *all* do. I was called in by Arthur Penn in June of 1978. I read the script and I was rather excited about it. The initial makeup requirements consisted mainly of my constructing what we call a 'mole' to travel under the skin of the actor's arm who was going to play Jessup. In the movie, when he is beginning to change his form, this mole (*Ed. note: in the movie, it is the first cosmic warning of change to come; a traveling lump of skin which runs along the outside of his skin*) runs up the actor's arm to his elbow and, then, disappears. There was also an ape creature, a little Jessup, to be designed but that didn't seem all that difficult. Arthur thought that there might be a few more little makeup 'problems' to worry about but nothing stupendous. With those understated makeup 'problems' still unknown, I launched myself into what turned out to be a horrendous job."

Smith began meeting with Gottfried, Penn, Chayefsky and the film's special effects chief, John Dykstra, every few weeks. These brainstorming sessions proved anything but productive, however. "At just about every meeting," recalls Smith, "we'd change everything that we had settled on in the previous meeting. Everything. We'd start from square one and state that everything that we thought was really terrific in the previous meeting was really lousy. This went on for weeks. My problem in these meetings was trying to get people to discuss my makeup chores—which were growing with each passing week.

"Everyone would readily discuss the optical special effects but they seemed to hesitate when it came to discussing makeup. I should explain that Arthur Penn wanted a physical approach to the illusions we were going to create. He tended to be leary of overcomplicated optical effects."

At this point in time, the film's script alluded to two major makeup scenes. Towards the end of the story, Jessup undergoes a strange cosmic transformation while housed in his isolation tank. Bursting forth from the tank, he mutates into various amorphous shapes before the eyes of his horrified wife (Blair Brown). The second major transformation scene occurs during the film's finale when both Jessup and his wife experience a metaphysical transformation.

Says Smith: "Arthur's theory at that time was that the tankroom scene should be done with optical effects. It wouldn't lean that heavily on makeup. Whereas the ending would be almost totally makeup, involving extensive physical transformations. I expressed doubt that this would work in that, in order to pull it off, we'd have to use rubber full bodysuits. I felt that it would be a waste of time to try to create something on the screen that was, in essence, a metaphysical transformation, in a physical way. I thought the rubber suits would be inadequate at best and, possibly, quite obvious. Arthur, however, felt that the rubber suits were the way to go. So, I started designing the rubber suits."

Even at this early stage of preproduction, *Altered States* was proving a headache in the making to Smith. Production designer Joe Alves and John Dykstra brought in a sculptor named David Sou-

Dick Smith's makeup artistry and Bran Ferren's opticals inflict the world's worst identity crisis on William Hurt.

salla. It was Sousalla's job to sculpt the various stages of Jessup's physical transformation for Smith to work from. The only problem was that the artist had no working knowledge of makeup application. And so, while Sousell sculpted bizarre figures on the West Coast, Smith struggled with his realistic rubber prototype on the East.

"I started to create a very rough full bodysuit," Smith says. "It was improvised out of sheets of soft polyurethane foam coated with a flexible urethane rubber. The first suit involved a scene where Jessup has one long, grotesque arm and a shriveled stump on the other side. The initial suit only went down to the waist. We blanked the face out with a few appliances.

"We shot a little movie test in a neighbor's basement with my son, David, filming with a 16mm camera. We came up with some footage that showed Jessup's chest inflating. It was crude but very encouraging. The people on the coast thought that a rubber suit was possible and, the funny thing was, it was beginning to look better on the screen than even I thought it would look."

Meanwhile, back at *Altered States* headquarters, the sculpted look was beginning to spell trouble for Smith. "The next problem was that David Sousalla was under orders from Arthur Penn. He did not accept advice or instructions from me very readily. He was creating these tremendous little sculptures. He was very talented but he had no concept of the practical makeup problems involved. He tended, as sculptors do, to exaggerate the human figures. They were caricatures. The proportions were not close to human proportions to start out with. You couldn't take an actor and put him inside one of these figures. He'd never fit.

"I complained about that but no one listened. Along the way, I made little sculptures myself. I did them hastily, however, as reference for the body suits. They weren't as detailed as David's. That was a big error on my part. Arthur was judging the direction of the makeup by the dramatic impact that these little statues had. David's were certainly more dramatic but they had nothing to do with realistic makeup problems."

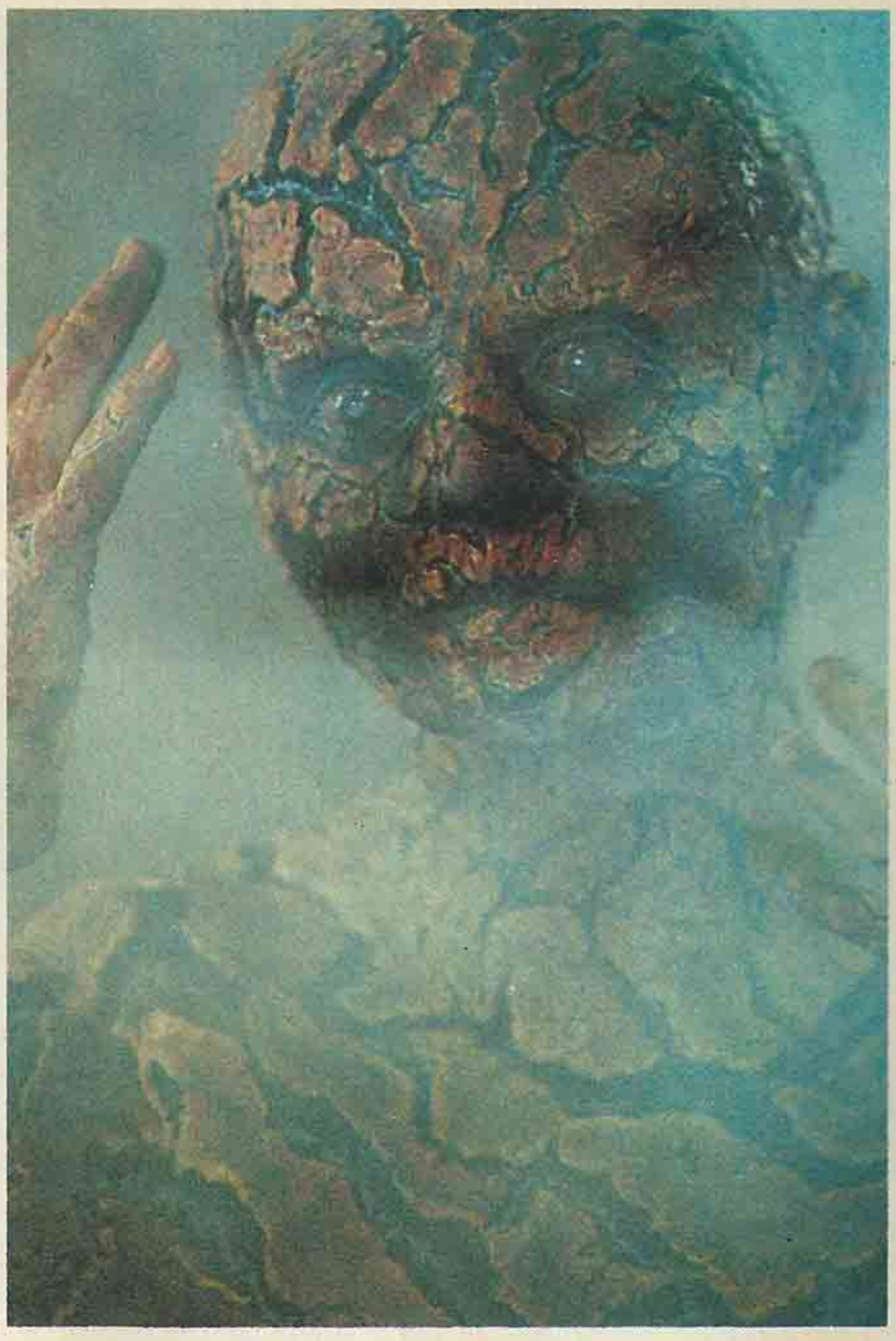
Finally, a showdown of sorts ensued. Smith managed to get Sousalla to both modify his designs and spend some time working on them in Smith's own East Coast headquarters. While that solved some of the existing problems for the makeup master, the West Coast crew, through their consistent indecision, caused even more Excedrin nightmares.

"I got my notes out the other day from all these meetings we were having," Smith chuckles. "And you wouldn't believe the number of scenarios that we came up with for that tank room sequence. At one point, we had the tank blowing up and Jessup blowing up with it. Pipes break and the tank room is flooded. Jessup metamorphosises into crystalline form. The crystals shot up out of the floor and form this shape. Then, Jessup's wife, Blair Brown, comes running into the room and looks into this crystal figure for some trace of her husband. The crystals slowly change and this mudlike form that resembles a Henry Moore statue appears. The mud flakes off the surface and it becomes a statue with Jessup's form inside it in an embryonic sack.

"I remember, at one point, having to consider the difficulties of creating a huge rubber balloon for the actor to scrunch up inside of and, then, figure out how the hell he'd be able to breathe in there. So, now we have in actor in this big sack. He has to struggle out of it. Jeez. During this time period, Penn had in mind Michelangelo's statues of The Slaves or The Captives. There are four of them. Half finished, so the human figures are half stuck in rock. It's a marvelous image to play with, sort of like a fly in amber. Arthur wanted that feeling of a body trying to pull itself loose from something that was gripping it. He never could decide what the hell happens to all the matter that this poor guy chucks off in the process. It was all part of him at first. They were all his atoms in the first place, right? He reconstitutes himself into a new form and then drops half of it on the ground while breaking out of it. How does that make sense? These were just some of the dumb questions I was always raising with Arthur. I tend to be very logical about these things. Arthur used to call me a very good gadfly."

While Penn muled over his effects—laden tankroom scene, Smith toiled away at the increasingly complicated end—sequence. "The ending involved three suits showing the man getting progressively

An oversized head, several feet in length, designed to "swallow" the camera lens.



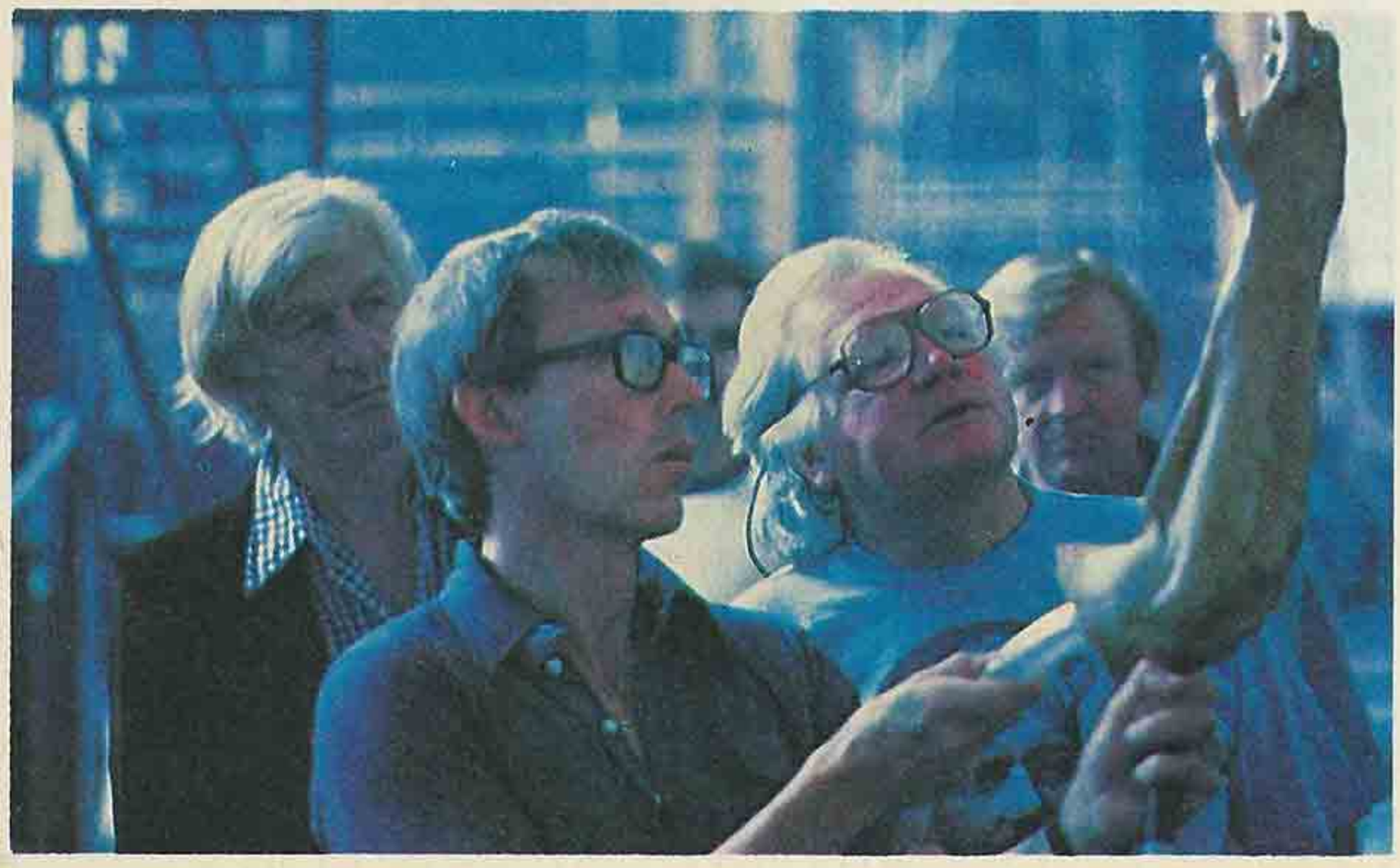
The suit at left was relegated to the cutting room floor; the "cracked" suit, though seen in the film, is hidden by opticals.

worse physically," he remembers. "The poor fellow sinks into the floor. Arthur wanted one of Jessup's arms to be fused to the heel of one leg. The other arm was to be fused over the top of his head with the hand grasping the opposite cheek. They'd both be locked into these positions by makeup.

"That imposed enormous engineering problems on us. We had to come up with a suit that an actor could get into and that makeup could be applied to. The makeup had to blend in perfectly so it wouldn't seem as if the actor was wearing a hood. The actor could only hold that awkward pose for a matter of a minute or two so we had to come up with a suit that could connect these parts simply and quickly and, then, disconnect the same way. We did it.

"We shot a 16mm test in my garage. It was surprisingly effective. When we were shooting it. I thought it looked lousy. When we saw the test, it proved to me that a rubber suit could be used in these scenes and work.

"We shot the image in mirrored mylar. We distorted the mylar slightly in order to distort the image. It gave us the effect that there was a metaphysical transformation going on. Jessup is not melting into the floor literally, like the *Incredible Melting Man*. His atomic glue is coming unstuck and he's having some kind of molecular disturbance. It's the sort of thing that you can visualize as a vague image that, to me, seemed to cry out for optical effects. Still, the test looked hopeful except for the bloody fact of having to have his hands stuck at those bizarre angles. The actor could hardly move. That's as far as we got when all hell broke loose on the coast."



Dick Smith, left, inspects a prosthetic "withering" arm with director Ken Russell.

All hell breaking loose entailed Columbia pictures letting John Dykstra go, having Joe Alves take a walk and giving director Arthur Penn the pink slip for allowing the film to incur, what the studio felt, were phenomenal bills. Director Ken (*The Devils' Tommy)* Russell was signed up and Dick Smith began to worry.

"Now I turned to Howard Gottfried and said 'God, Howard! What's going to happen when Ken Russell comes in? He'll change everything. This is the late fall. We can't possibly start everything from scratch and still make a January 1979 shooting deadline!" With the eternal optimism of all

The suit designed for the middle, but used in the climax, enhanced by opticals.

producers, Howard smiled and said, 'I don't think he can change much because we've been working on this for four months and we've come up with the best formula.' Famous last words. Of course, eventually, Ken Russell changed *every*thing.

"The first change occurred right away. He saw what we were doing with the suits and, in a cool way, approved. After he saw our tests, though, he felt that the rubber suits should be used for the tankroom scene and the opticals saved for the final transformation. So, in essence, we reversed our makeup priorities.

"Now we worked out a plan with Ken for the tankroom scene that consisted of the tank exploding and disappearing, the room flooding, the rest of the people being thrown clear and Jessup disappearing with the tank. After the turbulence in the room dies down, we were to see, coming up from the water, Jessup's arm. It makes a sort of helpless gesture and, then, as you stare at it, it shrivels up. It disappears beneath the water.

"There's a pause. Then, some kind of darkish shape emerges from beneath the water. As it drags itself up, we see that its the mishapen back and the head of Jessup. Here, the actor is in rubber suit number one. He continues to struggle upward until he is poised on one knee. His right arm is missing. There's just this stump. His left arm comes up in this frantic, clawing gesture. He reaches forward, confused, and grasps his head with his hand. The hand then fuses to his head.

"OK. We still have this one hand fused to the head. Thank God I talked Ken out of having the other hand grasping the heel or the fellow would have had one hell of a time getting out of the water. The hand fuses against his head and Jessup begins to scream. Suit number two.

"His body begins to tip back towards the water. The actor is more misshapen in the second suit. In the third suit, he's screaming and his mouth has enlarged to enormous proportions. There's this steady, horrible scream. His whole body is becoming amorphous. He's almost on his back in the water.

"The camera slowly closes in on the figure, zooming in on his oversized mouth. The camera is literally going to go into the mouth. The mouth would then turn into a black hole and the camera would dive through it. Just when it seems that Jessup is lost forever, his wife struggles past the debris and saves him from falling into this black hole by the sheer power of her love.

"How we were going to do a black hole in this fellow's mouth was a source of endless conversation. Anyway, this was what was approved by Ken Russell in January of 1979. They were starting to film the main parts of the movie at that time and I was ordered to have these suits, three in all, ready for May. We worked night and day on them, photographing everything and sending it out to Ken for approval. Then, more problems . . ."

This time around, the problems called for Columbia to drop the picture. Producer Gottfried now had a director and a movie but no distributor. The *Altered States* team aproached Warners with the project, with Smith's pictures of the Jessup sculptures being the only piece of tangible evidence of a film project the moviemakers had. Warners liked the idea and picked up the movie. Before too long, however, writer Chayefsky, not at all pleased at the way the new director was handling his work, took a rather long stroll from the movie set, and vowed to have his name totally disassociated with the film. *(Ed. note: It isn't).*

In the midst of the confusion, Smith was trying to juggle a half dozen makeup problems at once. "While we were making the transformation suits on the East Coast," he states, "they were fiddling with the ape scenes on the West Coast. In one scene, Jessup emerges from the tank transformed into a little australopithecus, a primitive man. We had originally wanted a five foot tall black man for this part. Arthur Penn had found a Nigerian that was quite acceptable. I had suggested a black man because the skin pigmentation would be dark and when we had to apply hair to various sections of his body, we wouldn't have to make up his skin. The basic proportions of the skull would also lend themselves more readily to a primitive man's profile. I didn't want to use big mechanical masks ala *2001*. I wanted to use a minimal amount of facial appliances and the largest possible dentures I could use so that the actor's own lips would be incorporated into the final makeup, creating more mobility for the mouth.

"We cast the body of the Nigerian and we were proceeding to work on his facial appliances when Ken replaced him with a Mexican ballet dancer. The new apeman was very agile. The Nigerian was a soccer player so he was athletic but not necessarily graceful. The new apeman, being a dancer, could handle the action better but he didn't have the profile I was looking for.

"That meant that we couldn't have a factually-oriented primitive man profile. Ken didn't mind at all. 'Just make him look good and primitive' he said. So, I just gave him large dentures, designed some light appliances for his face and, at Ken's request, gave him blue eyes like actor Bill (Jessup) Hurt. The finished makeup is far more human and modern than we had originally contemplated.

"Now, I was in my lab with my chief assistant Carl Fullerton. I couldn't have done this movie without him. We were still working on this tank room suit stuff when they were shooting the apeman scenes in California. I couldn't take care of the makeup I designed so Craig Reardon, a very talented young man, and Mike Hancock, worked on the scene on the coast. That was a four hour makeup job. Since the creature wasn't really an apeman as much as a human ape, the hair had to be pasted on each section of the body. At first, I toyed with the idea of having a zip up ape suit like the ones used in *2001* but, to be honest, they're awfully expensive and have their limitations in terms of movement.

"You also can't have suits like that made with short hair. The shorter the hair, the more the foundation the hair has been sewn onto shows. To make it look like a hairy man, the hair had to be layed on the actor's skin directly. The hair was pasted ahead of time on a lifesized form and then was applied on the actor in mats. We had the hair laid in patterns, patterns that would work on the front of the torso, etc. The hair was laid in an anatomically correct manner.

"The patterns followed the natural directions of hairgrowth on the body. These mats were sprayed on and removed everyday. It took four hours to apply all this and,

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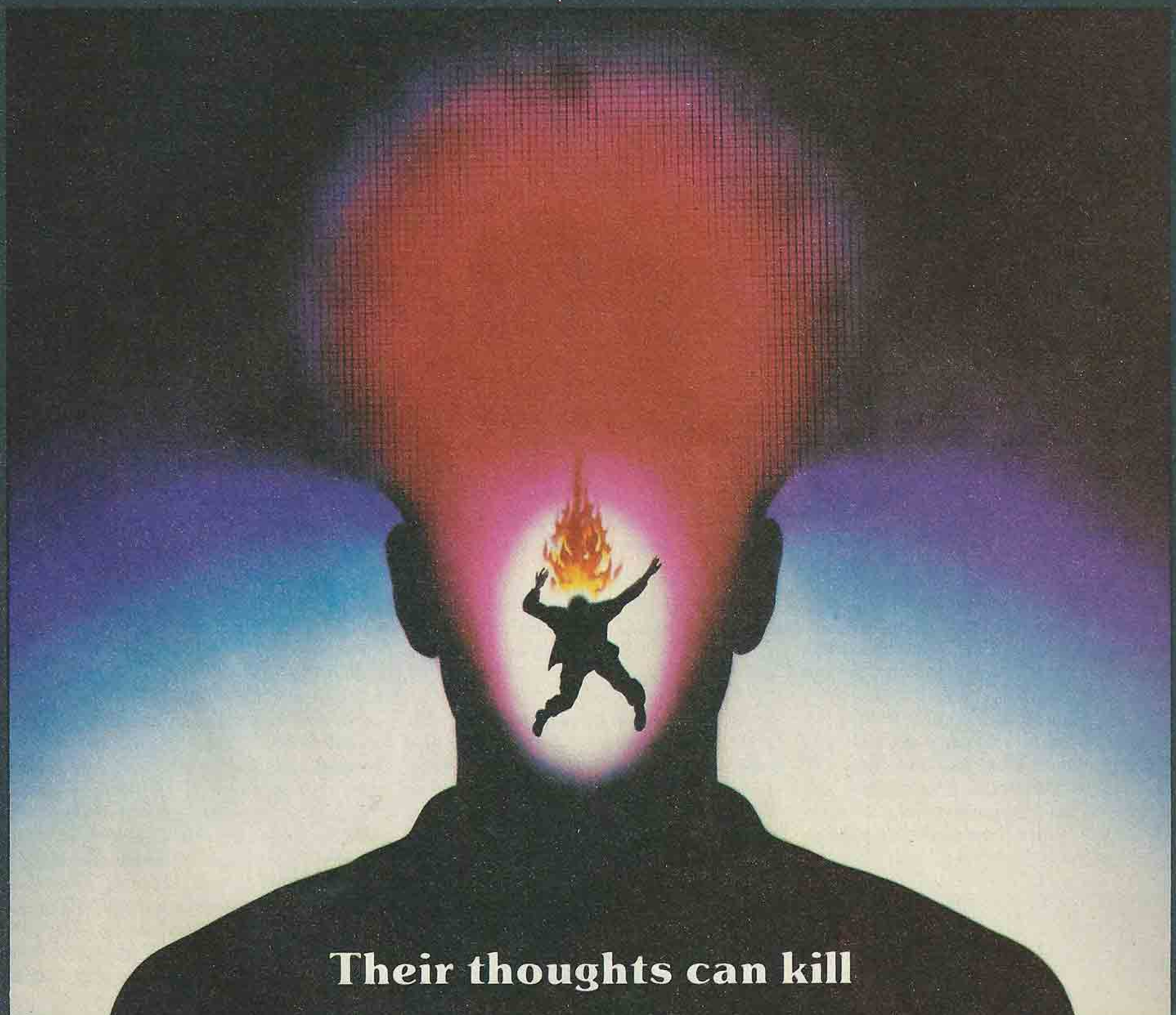
DAVID CRONENBERG'S

SCANNERS



By BOB MARTIN

It's the mid-1980s. Though not known to the general population, a new strain of humanity has emerged, perhaps the next step in human evolution. These are the scanners, people possessing incredible powers of telepathy. There are 237 scanners scattered around the globe .... and no one, anywhere, is safe.

That's the basic premise of *Scanners*, and for writer-director David Cronenberg, the film represents something of a departure. All three of his previous terror films concerned "ordinary" people cast into a nightmare by some form of physical mutation: the lustdriven parasite of *Shivers*, *Rabid*'s sexual vampire, *The Brood*'s hate-born brood-children. The mutants of *Scanners*, however, remain quite normal in appearance; it's their powers of mind that have changed. Set in the future, *Scanners* is more of a science fiction film than Cronenberg's previous terrors, but horror fans will be pleased to know that the film carries more than its share of sledgehammer shocks.

As Cronenberg puts it, "my horror films all have elements of science fiction, so it would be inevitable that my science fiction films would have elements of horror as well. I don't know at what balance point you'd call a film 'horror' as opposed to 'science fiction.' None of the stuff that I have done—and probably none that I'll ever do—is really hard core science fiction, which I tend to associate with hardware. You'll often find science fiction writers saying, '20 years ago, I predicted satellites.' That doesn't interest me at all. If that becomes the purpose of the fiction, it's not going to last very long, because once there are satellites, it just becomes a historical curiousity."

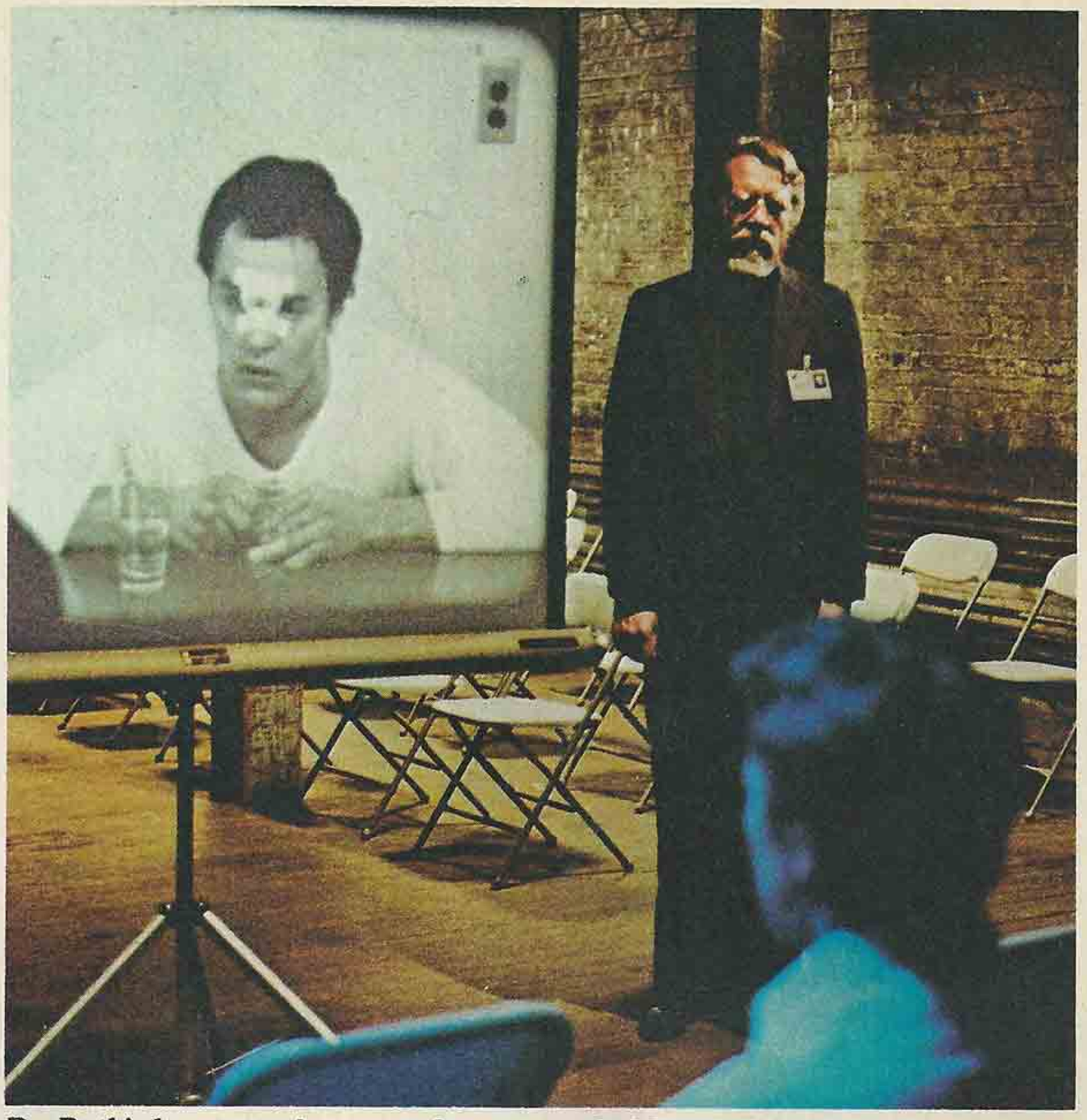
As Cronenberg pointed out in a previous FANGORIA interview (issue #3), it was the grim philosophy lurking behind

the ghastly transformations of *Shivers*, *Rabid* and *The Brood* that made those films such effective shockers. "*Scanners*' direction is quite different," admits the 36-year-old director. "Those dynamics are not what make it work, in fact they're almost not there at all. What does lay behind the film is a fantasy, I think a very powerful one, that I suppose starts as a child's fantasy. You go to sleep weak, and wake up finding that, in fact, you are strong. Someone says to you, 'not only are you not weak, you are stronger than you ever imagined'—that's one of the premises of the film, though it doesn't come out exactly that way."

Scanners' first scene takes place in an auditorium at the Consec Corporation, where scientist Dr. Paul Ruth (Patrick McGoohan) heads a program designed to study the powers of the scanners, to determine how they may be used for the "best interests" of humanity. A demonstration has been set up so that Consec's most powerful scanner can show the extent of his telepathic talent. Before the demonstration is completed, the power of another scanner interferes with the experiment, and Consec's top scanner dies a most horrible death (as depicted on this issue's cover). The scanner assassin, Revok (Michael Ironside), escapes to rejoin his outlaw group of scanner terrorists.

The loss of their top scanner cripples Consec's research program, and they set out to recruit "new talent." They find Cameron Vale (Stephen Lack), a 35-year-old derelict. Dr. Ruth teaches Vale to use his powers—powers that Vale never knew he had. Ruth and Vale are equally surprised to learn that Vale is the most powerful scanner yet discovered.

Consec has awakened Vale to his powers, and given him a reason to live. Assured of his loyalty to the Consec program, Dr. Ruth sends Vale out to infiltrate and expose the underground network of scanner rebels. In the course of his mission, Vale meets Kim Obrist (Jennifer O'Neill), a beautiful telepath who helps Vale to learn the truth about scanners, about Consec—and about himself.



Dr. Ruth's home movies: crazed scanner rebel Revok (Michael Ironside).

ALL PHOTOS: 1980 Avco Embassy

Gifted Teenagers

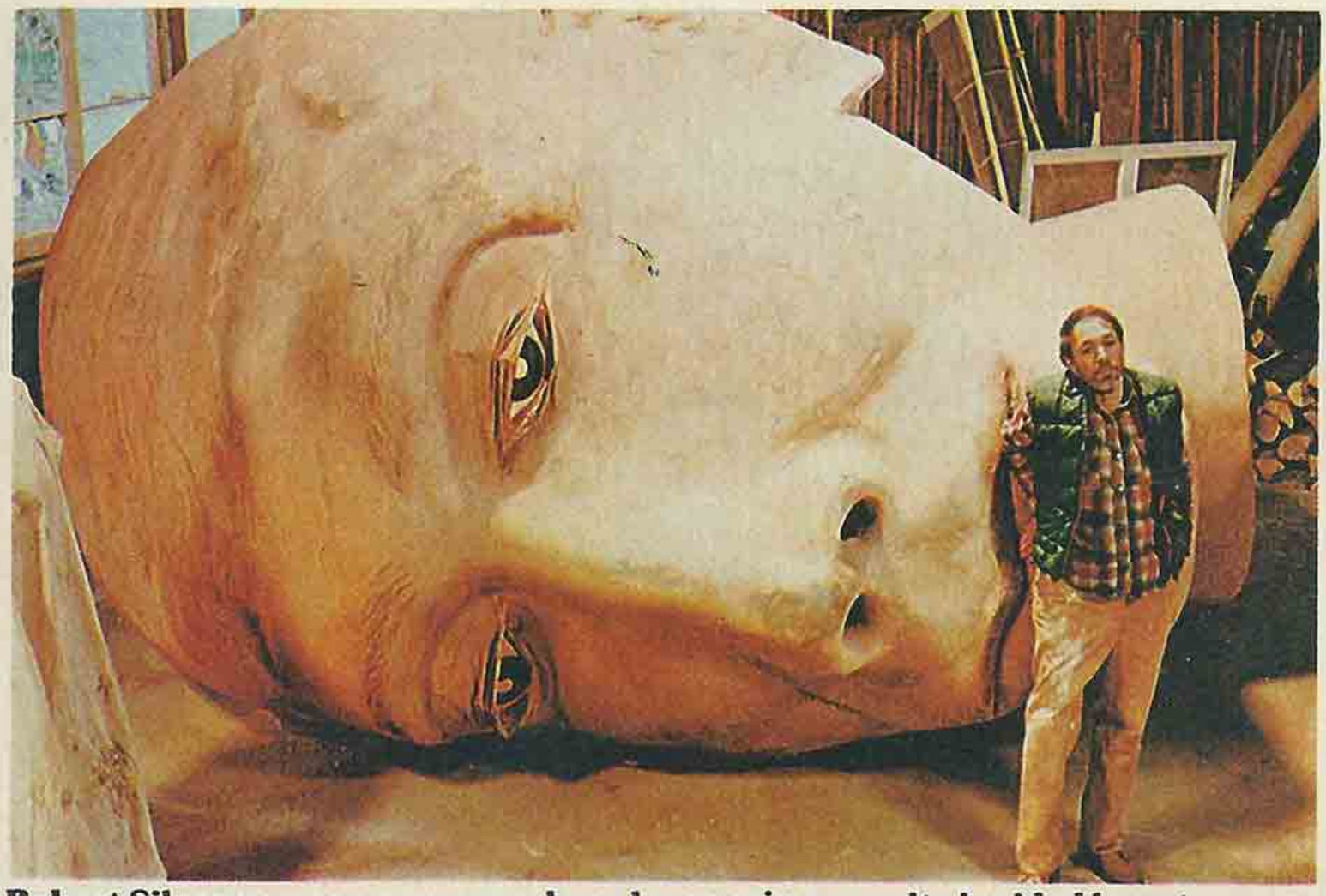
While the powers of the scanners may bear some surface resemblance to Brian de Palma's gifted teenagers in *Carrie* and *The Fury*, it's obvious even from this brief synopsis that those powers are simply the starting point for *Scanners*. In 1969, Cronenberg made a short experimental film called *Stereo*, his first film shot in 35mm, which also dealt with telepathy. In comparing the two films, Cronenberg notes that "they both use telepathy as a metaphor for a certain sensitivity—and a certain closeness and complexity of relationship. *Scanners* adds something else—the idea of the telepath as 'outsider'—by virtue not only of his power, but his strangeness as a result of having been brought up with that power."

When Cronenberg speaks of the scanners' powers, it often seems that he's speaking—perhaps just a bit—about his own unique talents. During our last interview, which occurred shortly before *Scanners* was announced, he told us about how he became a filmmaker.

Like his lead scanner, Cameron Vale, the young Cronenberg had no idea of the career that lay ahead of him. "In Toronto, you're completely isolated from any idea that you could make a film," the director recalls. "It's not like growing up in Hollywood."

His plans at the time were to become a novelist, following in the footsteps of his writer father. As a teenager, his first fiction was rejected by *The Magazine of Fantasy and Science Fiction*. Later, while attending the University of Toronto as an English major, his life was changed by just one movie.

"Another student at the university made



Robert Silverman as a scanner whose loose grip on sanity is aided by art.

a film," Cronenberg says, "and it was a revelation for me. I thought, my God, it walks and talks like a real movie, but it's got people I know in it! Nowadays, kids start making films in public school, so it's hard to realize what a tremendous shock it was for me to see that film. I started to read *American Cinematographer*, and I went to the encyclopedia and looked up 'lens' and 'camera.' I knew absolutely *nothing* and started from the technical end, and I hung out by camera stores, to speak to cameramen."

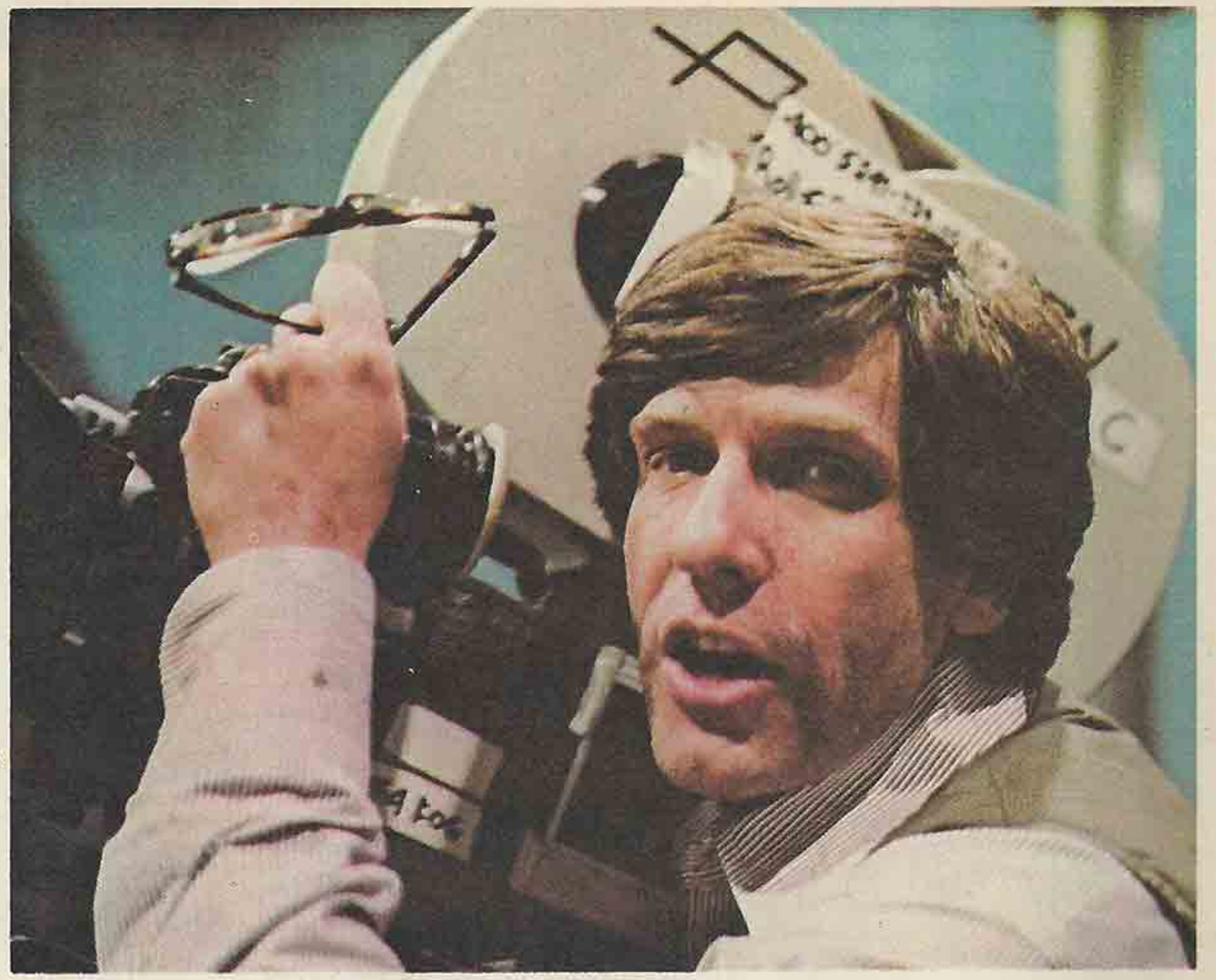
The fact that Cronenberg is a completely self-taught filmmaker might be one reason why his films are so unique, though he disagrees on this point. "I believe that someone of a very forceful creativity will be able to break free of whatever influences are restraining him. I've gone through that in terms of my writing, where I was very influenced by other writers. In fact, that comes out in a phrase in *Scanners*: 'With all those other voices in your head, how could you hear your own voice? That's true artistically, and it's also true of society in general."

Cronenberg freely admits that *Scanners* has been his most difficult film to make. "It was physically exhausting—very hard, very long hours. And it was very cold and damp during shooting, even our interiors, because we were using warehouses and abandoned buildings that were no longer heated, and Montreal in the winter is very cold.

"It was also very demanding because we had so little preproduction time. It was my biggest budget [around $5 million], my longest shoot—it turned out to be about 9 weeks—but I only had about two weeks for all the preproduction, which is ridiculous. And I had only written one first-draft script, which took me three weeks to write. That meant a lot of things weren't together. But it had to be done, so I found myself writing on the set, writing at lunch instead of eating, writing evenings, writing weekends. Then we had to juggle the schedule to make scenes that weren't ready, in terms of special effects and sets, happen later in the shooting, which you don't have to do if you're prepared. So in production terms it was very difficult.

"Because of that, I told the producers that we needed a very long post-production period, and they agreed. And we've had a fairly sizeable post production budget to help compensate for those things. I'm happy to say that it all came together miraculously well. It's an extremely complex movie in terms of plot, characters and action. And conceptually complex, because of what scanners are, what they do and why. There were times when I didn't know if I'd be able to make it all work, but it does work, and I've been getting the strongest reaction from people on this film that I have had of any of them."

While both Stephen Lack and Jennifer O'Neill are accomplished performers, and the real stars of *Scanners*, the most intriguing bit of casting was applied to the role of



A rare photo of David Cronenberg without his glasses.

Dr. Ruth, the man who heads Consec's scanners program. Ruth is played by Patrick McGoohan, whose work on television has produced two of the most admired series ever made—*Secret Agent* and *The Prisoner*.

"He was ... very *interesting* to work with," says Cronenberg, after a moment's hesitation. "He's certainly a very brilliant man, he's also a very complex man, and a very eccentric man. I don't think he would refute any of these. No two days were the same, except in terms of his performance, which was uniformly brilliant. I think that it's one of the best performances that he's given in a long time—not that he hasn't been good, but he's just particularly superb in this role. I've been very happy with his participation."

As the scope of Cronenberg's work has grown, so have his film crews. *The Brood* and *Scanners* both employed a number of cast and crew members from the U.S. We wondered whether working with an international crew had any special poblems for Cronenberg. "Actually not," the director replies. "A lot depends on the specific temperament of the people involved. Patrick (McGoohan) was very impressed by the crew in Montreal; he had been a little worried about coming into the provinces, worried about the professionalism of the people. It didn't take him long to come to depend upon them, and feel secure about it. Dick Smith, too, came to be pretty happy with the people there, and his Montreal-based assistant, Stephen Dupuis. At that point, it becomes truly international. It's no shock to me in any way—we really do speak the same language."

Among the imported talents Cronenberg worked with was Dick Smith, the acknowledged master of prosthetic make up, whose accomplishments are chronicled elsewhere in this issue. Also on board was Chris Walas, whose work for *Galaxina* was featured in issue #7, and who has since completed work for the upcoming prehistoric comedy *Caveman* and the Disney-Paramount coproduction *Dragonslayer*. "Dick Smith was with us right from the beginning, as a consultant," says Cronenberg. "Chris Walas, Stephen Dupuis, and the other effects men, Tom Schwarz and Gary Zeller, along with the art director Carol Spier and I, all went down to Dick's house in New York state. We discussed everything, I told him what we wanted, and he talked to everyone about what materials he thought should be used, techniques and so on. I was very flattered that he showed a real interest in the film; he said he liked the script and the idea of the film enough to work on it, but he was just exhausted from working on *Altered States* for 10 or 11 months. So he was very 'present' from the start, though the one thing he said he couldn't do was come up to the set.

"For the last scene, though, our lack of preproduction finally caught up with us. Some of the effects that we wanted just didn't work well enough, we really hadn't worked them out in enough detail to make it work. By mutual consent, everybody agreed that they hadn't worked, including the effects men, and it was just the end of the line for *everybody*—we were all exhausted. So, after editing for quite a few months, I got to that scene, and I said to the producers, 'look, there's nothing there, we've got no ending. Everything up to that point is incredibly strong, and it's just not going to work.' We had thought of releasing the film in Dolby stereo, and we

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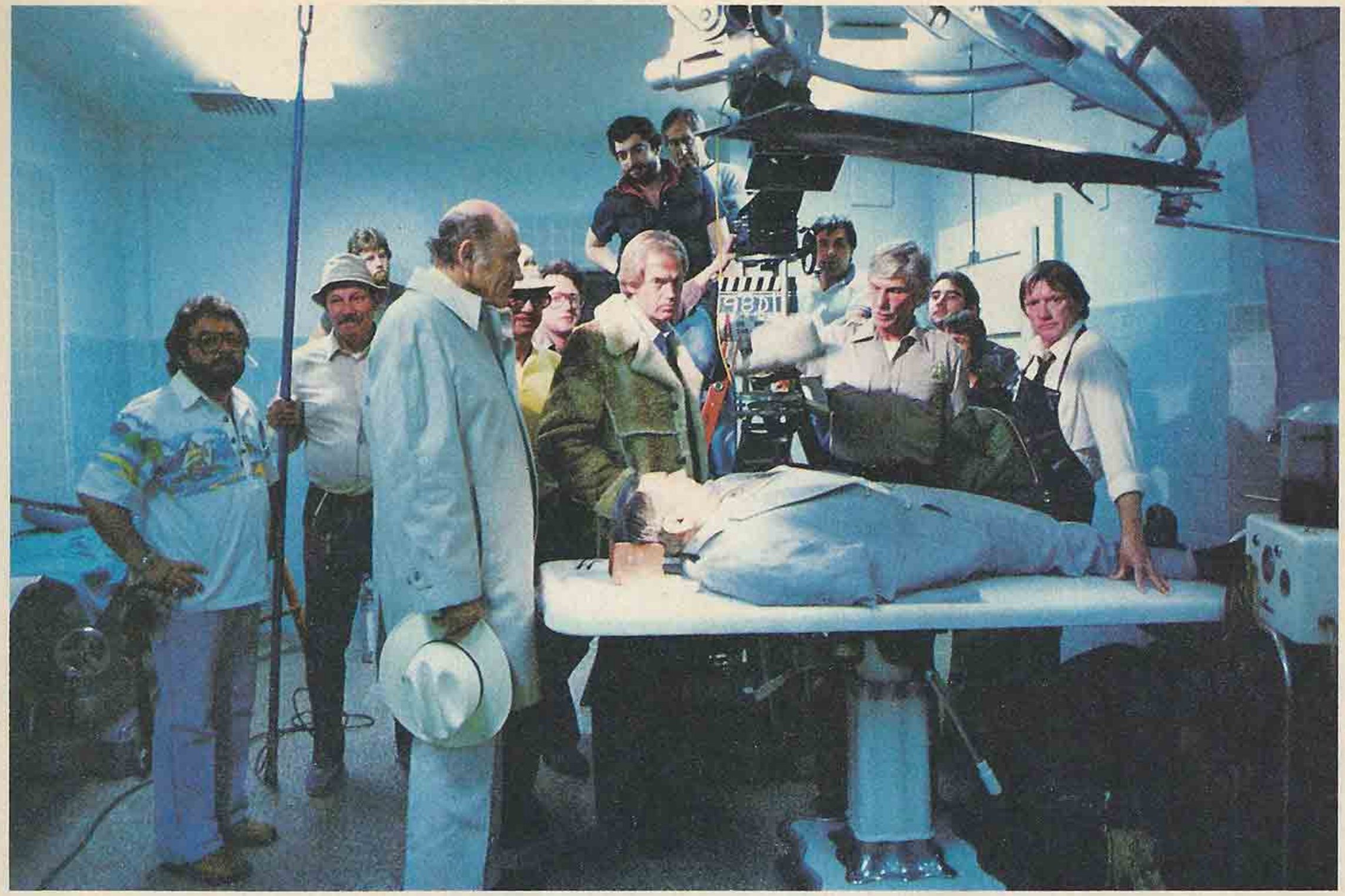


R.G. Armstrong (in white), Ronny Cox (in fleece), L.Q. Jones (in mustache) and other cast/crew-members surround the corpse of Luke Askew, the Beast's first victim.

The Beast Within
On Location

By BOB MARTIN

To most SF and Fantasy film journalists, the word "junket" is most significant when applied to a milky dessert custard. The "press junket"—a trip to the set of a film-in-progress, financed by the film's production company in the interest of generating publicity—is an expensive proposition, usually reserved for the "big guns" of journalism; opinionmakers like *Time* or *Newsweek*, major urban newpapers, or prestige journals like *American Film* or *Film Comment*.

But when it comes to horror film, the slicks and the dailies seem unable to get it quite right; even post-*ALIEN*, they seem obligated to view scare movies as strictly grade-B material. And, while the views of these journals can hurt or help box office, it's becoming clearer that it's the voices of the little guys—the so-called "fan press"—that determines the nature of the word-of-mouth among horror film fans. The movie industry is only beginning to perceive the importance of this early-warning system, and how crucial it can be to any one film's success in a very crowded field. Harvey Bernhard best known as the producer of the *Omen* trilogy (see FANGORIA interview, issue #11) is particularly sensitive to this state of affairs; he is also convinced that his picture *The Beast Within*, now filming in Raymond, Mississippi, is a very special sort of horror movie. In order to spread the news that something special was happening on this remote location, Bernhard gave the OK to a very special sort of press junket—composed primarily of journalists representing the small-press publications specializing in horror, fantasy and science fiction film.

So it was that our motley crew came together; a ten-person team representing a wide variety of publications. Within a few hours of our arrival, we found ourselves forming fast friendships with a number of our professional "rivals"—such folks as mirthful Mike Kaplan of *Cinefantastique;* rambling Ron Borst from *Famous Monsters;* stolid Steve Vertleib of *Cinemacabre;* and sundry others too wonderful to mention, as well as two tokens from the world of non-fantasy press, jolly Jim Verniere of the *Aquarian* weekly and titanic Tom Seligson of *Gallery*.

Since the town of Raymond consists of little more than a handful of buildings, the representatives of the press were housed in the nearby city Jackson (capital of Mississippi, population 350,000). We were greeted at the Sheraton Inn hotel by none other than Mick Garris, formerly Avco Embassy's executive consultant on the marketing of horror and fantasy film. Garris is now with PMK, the public relations firm that is handling *The Beast Within*, and it is Garris and Susan Chavez of the same firm who have organized our little outing. After aquainting ourselves with some of the worst hotel food it has ever been our displeasure to encounter (the steak's not bad, we later learned—remember this if you're ever at Jackson's Sheraton Inn), we drifted into the hotel bar, clutching the press packet Garris had handed us as we entered the hotel lobby.

After dealing with the slowest hotel bar service in the Western hemisphere, we carried our ginger ale to a nearby table, where we discussed with Mike Kaplan and Steve Vertleib the wisdom of doing features on *Star Trek: The Motion Sickness* a full year after its release. In the course of our discusssion, we started to peruse the contents of the press packet, including the

photos printed on these pages, when the gentleman at the table next to us asked if he could have a look. With our usual sadistic intent, we selected the most graphically disturbing photo, and handed it to him.

"Ah, yes," the gentleman said, "I remember this well," And so we met the director of *The Beast Within,* Philippe Mora,

Born in Paris and raised in Australia, Mora, we learned has been a lifelong movie maniac. When he was 8 years old, he was given an 8-millimeter movie camera and, after that, Mora recalls, "I was always making movies. I'd go to see *Tarzan* movies, and then that afternoon I'd make my own *Tarzan* with my brother. As a matter of fact, I just saw some of those for the first time in a long while the other day—they're hilarious.

"Around 1966 or 67, Josef von Sternberg came to Melbourne, Australia. It was like God had come down for a visit; he had come to attend a tribute to his films at the Melbourne Film Festival. I was about 15, and through some connection with my family, my mother talked him into looking at some the 8-mm films. He was so gracious to even look at this garbage that this kid had made, some precocious brat, but he sat through all of them. I was also painting at the time, and I showed him some of my paintings, and before he left, he gave me some advice. He said, 'You better stick to movies.' "

Until Australia's recent explosion of film talent, there were no formal film schools in Australia; the new Australian filmmakers that have emerged in recent years have been largely self-taught, and dependent on their fellows in a tightly-knit film community. One of Mora's oldest and closest friends is Jim Sharman, director of *The Rocky Horror Picture Show* and the forthcoming sequel, *Shock Treatment.*

"He used to direct plays in Melbourne, and I used to go and watch him. Later we were both in London when he showed me a videotape of this play, *The Rocky Horror Show,* and told me he was going to direct it as a film. I said to Jim, 'You can't do this, it's all cliche—and what's this Dr. Frank N. Furter . . . that's not funny! You must be kidding.' But he said, 'No, no, no, it's gonna work, I know how to do it.' Then it opened, and I was right . . . for about six months. He's a close friend; so is Peter Weir (director of *The Last Wave*), though I haven't been to Australia for three years. But we all knew each other, and have admired each other's work."

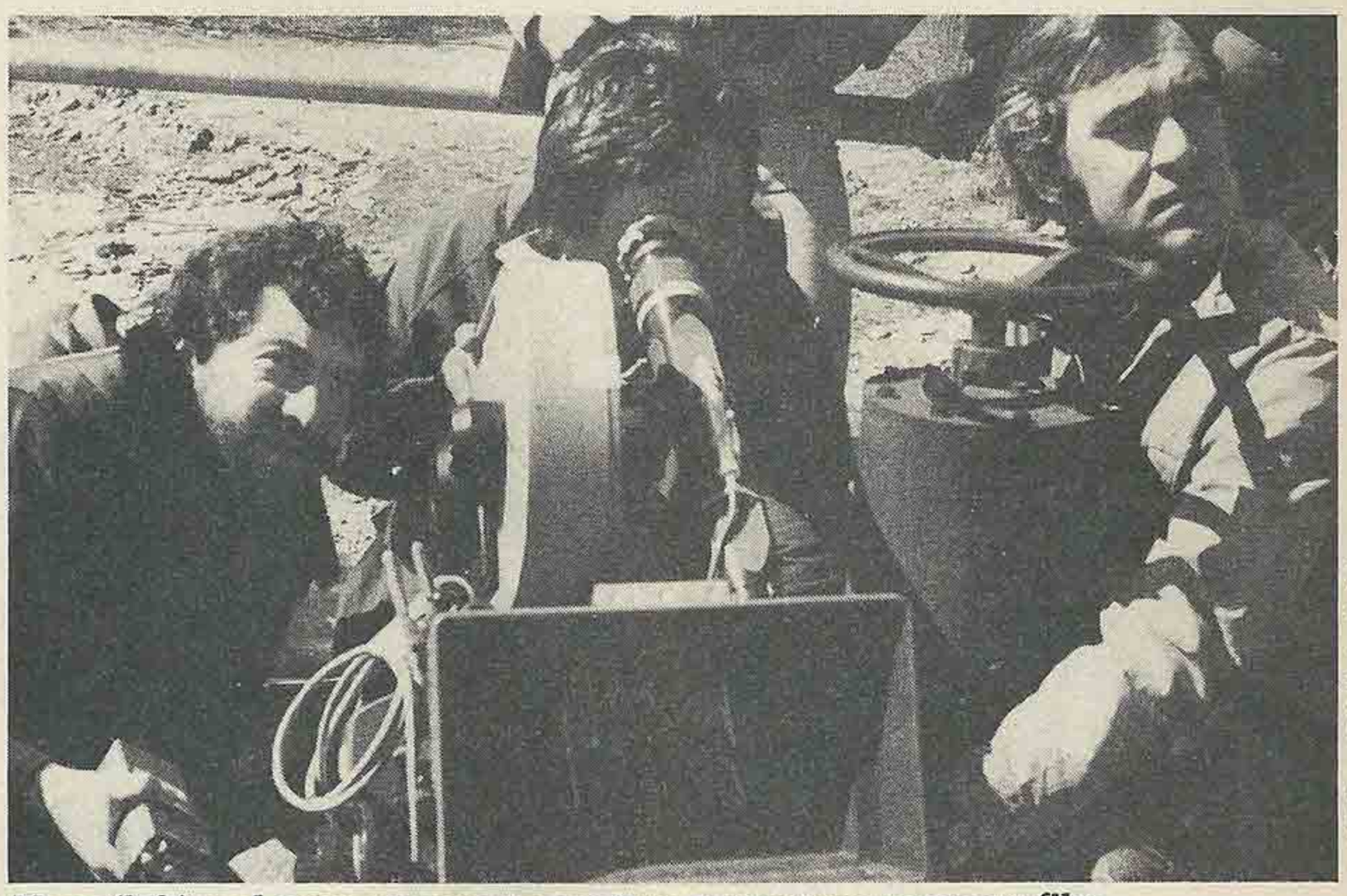
We had barely begun a discussion of Mora's work—his documentaries, *Swastika* and *Brother Can You Spare A Dime,* and his previous fiction films, *Trouble in Melopolis,* a bizarre musical, and *Mad Dog,* an adventure film set on the Australian frontier—before we learned that bars in Jackson close every night at midnight (except on Sundays, when they don't open at all). Before winding it up, we spoke just a bit about *The Beast Within.*

"United Artists, specifically Steve Bach, Robert Winch and Anthea Silbert, had seen *Mad Dog* and really liked it. They sent the script of *The Beast Within* to me, and I found it fascinating, particularly the metamorphosis. Everyone who has spoken to me about this film asks about the Beast; what is the Beast, what does it look like. The point is that the Beast looks like many things—there isn't one single Beast in this film, there's many. Even the literal Beast changes throughout."

The Beast Within, then, is one of the current wave of films concerning "shape-shifters"—cinematic were-creatures such as those seen in Joe Dante's *The Howling,* and currently planned for John Landis's *An American Werewolf,* Paul Schrader's *The Cat People,* and Jon Davison's *Shapes.* We asked Mora where he feels this sudden trend arose.

"Have you read Kafka's *Metamorphosis*? The idea of shape-shifting has been with us forever, perhaps because we're all constantly changing, and evolving. As I said, I was first drawn to this script, more than a year ago, because of the transformation of a central character. It's a classic horror theme, going all the way back to Jeckyll and Hyde, the original for all such films."

"The script also struck me as an encyclopedia of horror films. Harvey and I found that we both had a very similiar, clear idea of where we should go with it. The script went through perhaps eight or



PHOTOS: © 1981 United Artists

Mora (left) and crew prepare to capture a stunt sequence on film.

Meet the press: mighty Mick, bashful Bob, titanic Tom, Beastly Paul Clemens, jolly Jim, rambling Ron and (kneeling) mirthful Mike.

nine rewrites—you might say it went through a metamorphosis."

We thanked Mora, and made arrangements to speak to him at greater length on some future date, and retired to our room. In our absence, someone—presumably the maid—had opened the Gideon Bible to Isaiah 53. After finding nothing of particular significance in the chapter, we caught the last few minutes of Richard Fleischer's *The Vikings* on TV and, at about 2 a.m., the sign-off. All-night movies are a broadcasting innovation not yet introduced to Jackson.

Late next morning was the occasion for a gala brunch, attended by cast, crew and press. Harvey Bernhard kicked off the proceedings rather casually, handing out *Beast* caps to the press, while we wandered about the room, speaking informally to the early arrivals, and examining some Polaroid tests of makeups devised by Tom Burman and his assistant on the film, Tom Herbert. Curiousity about the Beast was high, but the shots depicted the Beast's victims, with not a single glimpse of the Beast itself.

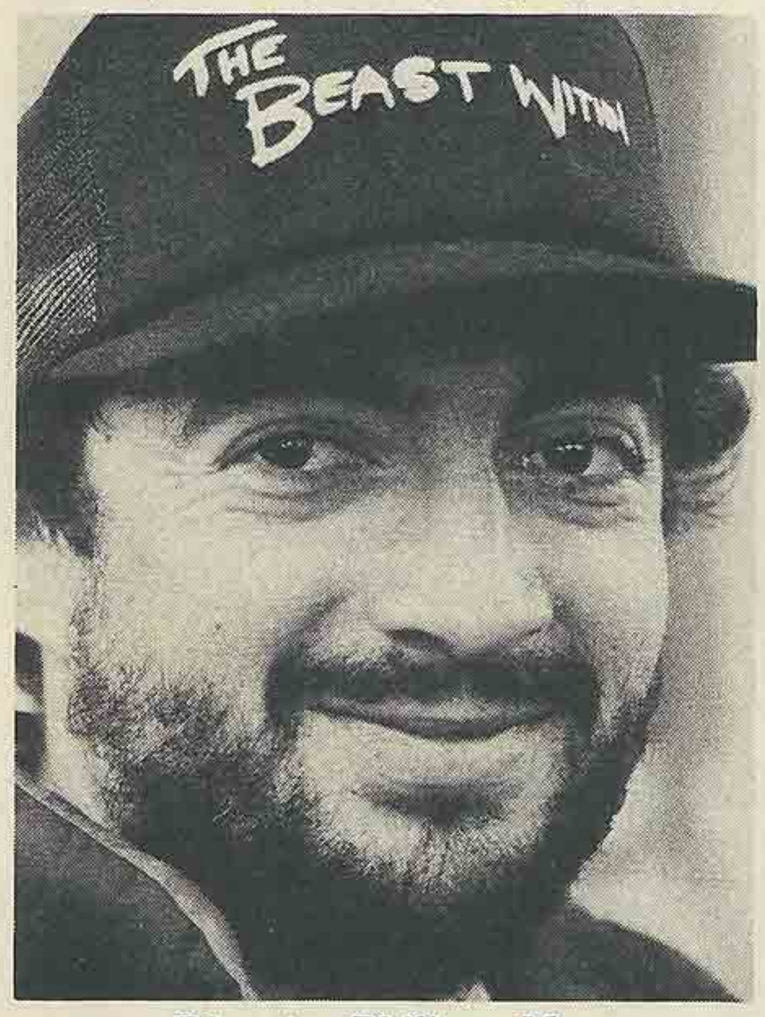
The brunch had its humorous aspect; the cast and crewmembers attending had been subjected to the Sheraton's idea of breakfast for some weeks already, and had apparently already taken care of that meal, or were deferring it until later that day, while the press had yet to learn that lesson. As we loaded and cleaned our plates of dry potatoes and runny eggs (talk about horrors!), Philippe Mora, seated opposite us, smiled with perhaps a hint of sadistic glee, with only a coffee-cup before him.

After breakfast, washed down with uncounted gallons of alleged coffee, Harvey Bernhard stood to speak to us a bit on why we were there, and what to expect during our brief stay. As he spoke, I had in mind the endorsements of Bernhard we had heard from two very fine directors. When we spoke to Richard Donner about *The Omen*, he was eager to share credit for the excellence of that film with its producer, Bernhard, saying, "Harvey's a lovely man; as a producer he's a wonderful, take-charge, seat-of-the-pants kind of guy. *The Omen* started when Harvey hired David Seltzer to write a screenplay from his idea—so the whole thing was Harvey's idea to start with." And on the previous night, Mora had said of Bernhard: "I've found in working with him that Harvey, as a producer, is absolutely outstanding; he gives me freedom, support, feedback and back-up—no bullshit and no fretting. I'm sure we'll be working together again."

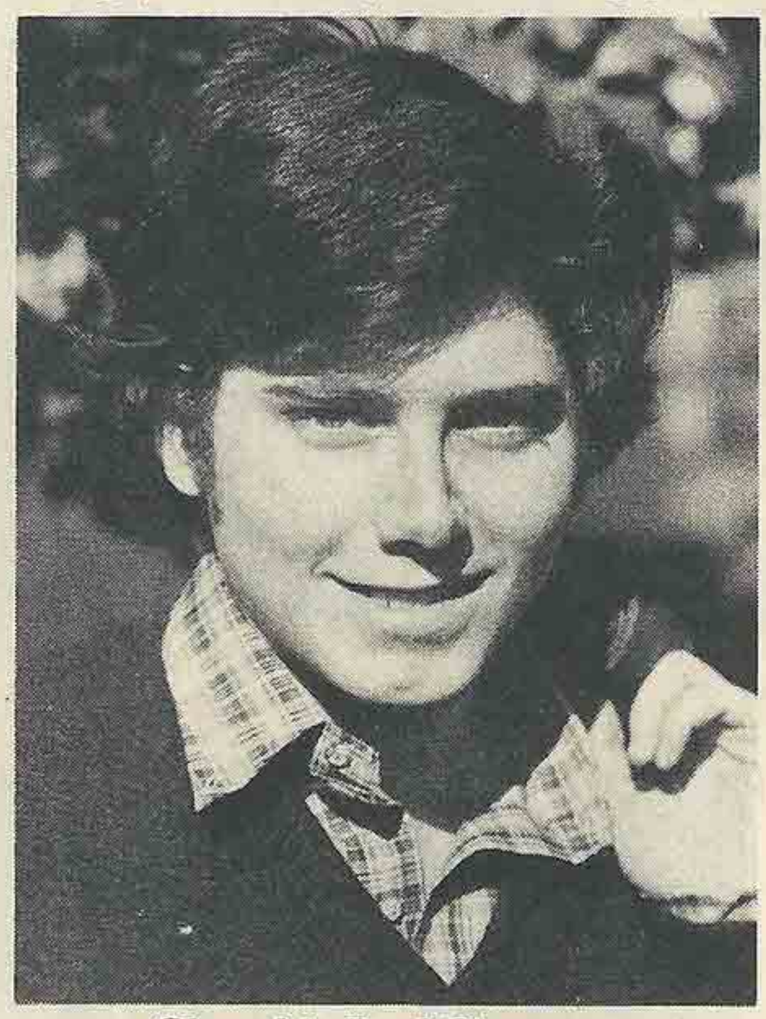
Bernhard speaks of his newest film like the father of a perfect new baby. "The picture that is going to be made," he announced, "and released on Halloween, is one that I'm already very proud of; thanks to Philippe, Jack Bernstein (executive producer and production manager), and the whole cast, I think it could be something that I've always wanted to make—a classic horror picture, which will stand up to the test of time. It has great suspense, a superior cast and some excellent effects—including something that is going to scare the living shit out of everyone in the theater."

Tom Huerber then took the floor to speak about some of the film's special makeup effects, confining himself, at Bernhard's request, to such details as the chemical composition of the theatrical blood used by Burman Studios—questions concerning the Beast were kindly refused, or politely squashed by Bernhard himself. "I saw the recent issue of FANGORIA with the creature from *The Funhouse* on the cover," said Bernhard at one point, "and that's the one thing I really don't want to happen on this production," pointing out that such photographs published in magazines prior to the film's release must inevitably diminish the impact of the actual creature in the film.

We did learn, however, that the Beast is to be played by Paul Clemens, a young film actor with a passion for monster films. He is a regular reader of FANGORIA (Hi, Paul!) and a one-time contributing artist for *Famous Monsters*; when one of the cast was talking about exploitation films as opposed to such "true horror" films as *The Beast Within, Texas Chainsaw Massacre* drew some heavy fire as an example of an extremely violent film. Clemens didn't interrupt, but at the first opportunity he staunchly defended Hooper's work, pointing out that *TCM*'s violence is more implied than seen. Though 23, Clemens has a youhful, innocent look that makes him perfect for the role of 17-year-old Michael/the Beast. We asked him in view of his love for the genre, how he felt about being cast in the film. "It is a childhood dream of mine," says Clemens, "to be in quality horror film. I would not want to do any kind of maniac-cut-'em-up film; in fact I turned one such film down some time ago. It's a very complex kind of character, because it's built on several different levels. One aspect of the character is very normal, and then very, very confused; other aspects of him are . . . *other*. It's almost like a combination of *Jekyll and Hyde* and *The Three Faces of Eve*, put together in a weird way."

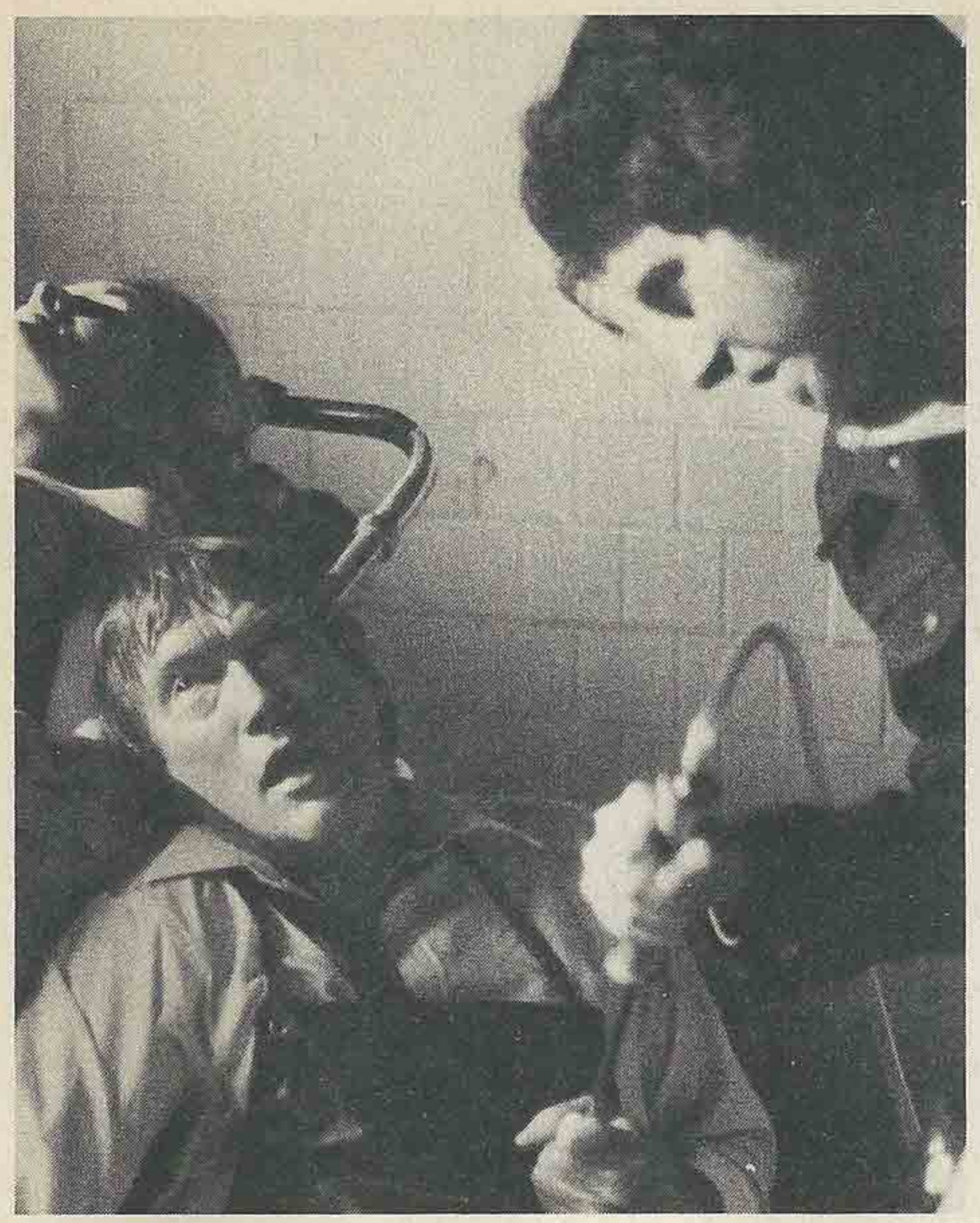


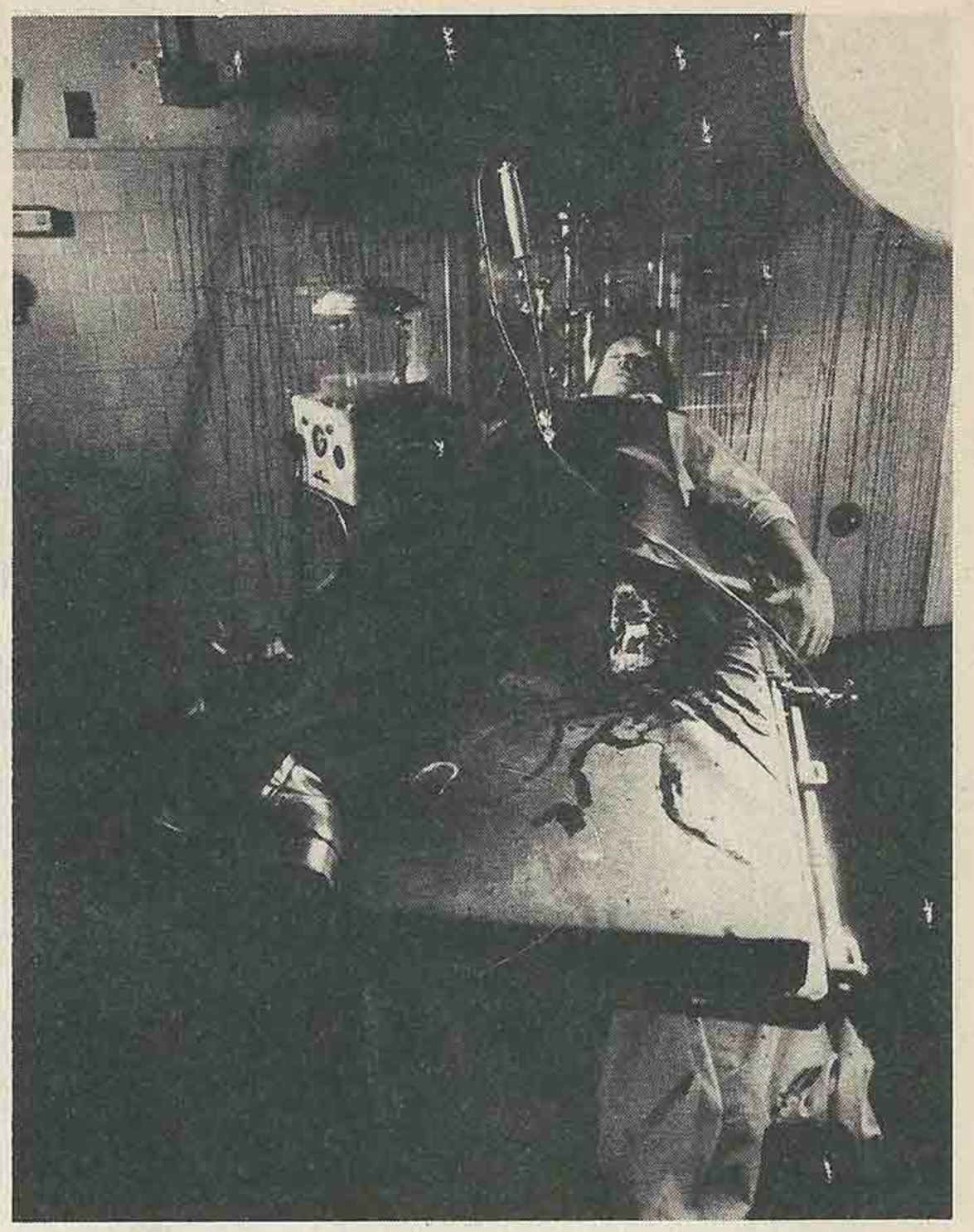
Director Philippe Mora



Cherubic Paul Clemens

Do you believe that Mora or Clemens could be responsible for Luke Askew's ghastly demise?





After dispatching a mortuary attendant, the Beast chows down on his leg—no doubt as an alternative to hotel food.

The conversation soon devolved into a discussion of the relative value of gore in horror films (which frankly folks, is beginning to bore your editor; not the gore, but the endless discussion of it). Before too long, however, Harvey Bernhard renewed our interest with his revelation of the start of the project.

We had already been informed that Bernhard had first been inspired by a listing in an Arbor House book catalog, detailing the story of a novel proposed for publication called *The Beast Within*. "It was the story of a fellow, who was sort of a nutter, who believed that sex was a sin of the flesh," Bernhard revealed. "He married a young girl, but never had any sex with her; along came the proverbial travelling salesman, who beds the young wife. They get caught by the first guy, who kills his wife, and keeps the salesman in the fruit cellar, along with the cadaver of the girl . . . 17 years later, this guy has changed into a beast; he escapes, kills his captor, and runs into the swamp and rapes a woman. The birth of the resulting child is the *start* of our *The Beast Within*."

According to Bernhard, the book had not yet been written at the time it was purchased from Arbor House and its author; and the book that was eventually written has no bearing on the actual screenplay. It will be published later this year, and, because of prior ownership of the title, no novelization of the screenplay can be written—as was done so profitably by David Seltzer on *The Omen*.

"I offered to put his name, with the credit 'from a story by' on the jacket, but he won't accept that. The guy got $25,000 for a paragraph," laments Bernhard.

This is the *real* Harvey Bernhard—our photo in ish #11 was miscaptioned!

The top-billed star of the film is Ronny Cox, an actor with such distinguished credits as *The Onion Field* and *Deliverance* supporting a formidable reputation as an actor. Cox has also been in two previous horror films, *The Amityville Horror* and *The Car*. When the latter was mentioned, the subject provoked considerable laughter. "I will say this about *The Car*," says Cox, "I got to say the funniest loop line I've ever said in my life on that picture. They'd sold it to television, and they'd already used up their time for looping, so they had to pay me $500 to loop this one line, where I said 'The son of a bitch is gaining on us.' You couldn't say that on television. So I figured this one line should take me five minutes—just in and out. Two and a half hours later, I'm still there, because someone, in their inimitable wisdom, had decided what I should say to match the lip movements—'The sick ornery beast is gaining on us!' You just try saying that with a straight face! "

"I was in *The Car* also, and I *meant* it to be funny," says R.G. Armstrong. "There was nothing else you could do with it." Armstrong is one of Hollywood's greatest characters; though his name may not be familiar, his face is the best known in the entire cast. He's been seen in countless television roles and such classic western films as *From Hell to Texas, Ride the High Country* and *El Dorado*. "I'm excited about playing the doctor in the film," says Armstrong, "as the one who begins to detect certain phenomena happening to the boy, it gives me a chance to begin to discover, and react with amazement, as I see these things begin to happen. The boy starts to grow an inch in a day, gaining weight, and the skin cracks open down his back; I see that first, and I've got to establish that credibility, as the transformation moves along. And I'm glad to have the opportunity to do this, as opposed to the sort of role I'm usually playing—I usually play the sort of monster that hits somebody. And one of my favorite actors was Lionel Atwill, who played the doctor in so many of the classic films."

Armstrong is also excited about the

script s element of transformation. "You've got to really move the audience now, and try to transcend what they've seen before, or they'll say 'oh, that, I've seen that.' So they want more bloodshed, or more gore; but they also want to see something transform, because this is what we're about. We all see transformations going on about us; worms growing into butterflies, and people struggling against impossible odds to change themselves; but I often wonder, though, why they're always showing people turn into beasts—why not transformation into angels, or higher energy beings, which is what we are headed for? But we don't want to deal with that; we still have to deal with this beast-thing—which is in every one of us."

It was a short while later that the brunch broke up, and Armstrong's words were the ones that stayed in mind in the course of our walk back to the hotel room. Since we'd first covered *The Howling*, we had been feeling that creature-films might again come into popularity; though several recent attempts at such movies had been made before Dante's, they all failed to really capture the wide audience that, for instance, *Friday the 13th*, or *Maniac*, had earned.

Perhaps Armstrong had a least part of the answer; *Prophecy, The Dark, Humanoids from the Deep* and *Blood Beach* certainly qualified as monster pictures, and each of these was, in its own way, a success. But a vital element was missing in each, and Armstrong had put his finger on it. The aliens of *Blood Beach* and *The Dark*, the mutants of *Humanoids* and *Prophecy*, don't have the least connection with humanity. There's no chance that any one of them could be your brother, your own parent, the man next door, or even distantly related to your own "beast within." Yet every classic creature—Frankenstein, King Kong, or Larry Talbot the Wolf Man—has that human core. Even Dracula, who is not exactly the guy next door, started out as a mortal man. Bernhard was very insistent on the point that the picture did not totally rely on the Beast for success; that the story, and the performances by an admittedly excellent cast of players, were at least equally important. But it seemed to me that the Beast had to be the starting point—after all, it is the title character—yet, what assurance did we have that the Beast would be as riveting as it needed to be for this film?

In the hotel room, fresh linen had been placed on the bed and in the bathroom; and once again the Bible had been taken from the drawer where we had placed it, and opened to the same pages. A little spooked, and a little annoyed, we picked it up to replace it in the bureau drawer; but this time our eyes were caught by the last few lines of Isaish 52: "Many were astonished at him; his appearance was so marred beyond human semblance, and his form distorted beyond that of the sons of men, that he will frighten many nations. Kings will shut their mouths because of him, for

Prior to his physical transformation, the Beast makes a snack of Luke Askew.

they will see those things which have not been told them . . ."

Draw your own conclusions about that one, folks.

On Monday, our third and last day in Jackson, we were all invited to the actual location for a few hours to see cast and crew at work. At an abandoned water-pumping facility redressed by the set crew as a power plant, Paul Clemens as the Beast was to attack and kill Tom Laws, an indian character played by Ron Soble. The day before, Clemens had explained to us the importance of Soble's role. "If you lock someone in a basement and feed them a corpse, they're not going to physically transform into a monster," Clemens told us. "They're not going to mutate. In the picture, though it's not completely detailed, there's a strong hint that the Beast's transformation is somehow tied in with indian magic. It's indicated that a lot of this comes about because of the relationship of the indian character, Tom Laws, with my father, somewhere in the past."

The scene involving Laws' demise comes early in the course of the Beast's transformation; unruly hair and some grotesque, but conventionally-applied facial makeup was all that was required to transform Clemens from a cherubic teen into a rampaging quasi-Beast. Most of our set visit involved the rigging of two set-ups; first was the stunt, as the Beast hurled Laws (actually stunt co-ordinator Sorin Pricopie) from the top of the power plant; and then the actual death of Laws, as actor Ron Soble, apparently caught on a power coil, spasmed through his death throes amid a torrent of sparks and flame, courtesy of pyrotechnicians Fred Cramer and Garry Elmendorf.

The stunt had a real element of danger; in order for Clemens (who is, in fact, merely mortal) to hoist Pricopie above his head with Beast-like ease, Pricopie was hoisted by wire, pulley and counter-weight, with a switch in his hand that controlled a small explosive charge attached to the wire above him. When Clemens picked Pricopie up and held him over the railing above the ground, Pricopie was to ignite the charge, which would sever the wire and send him plummetting to an air-mattress below. But the blast could not come too soon, which would dash him

against the power-plant's wall, or too late, which would plunge him onto the metallic power-coils. There was only a few feet of clearance between the two; only a single moment that was "right."

After a good deal of time spent finding the right amount of counter-weight for Pricopie's wiry frame, the stunt seemed ready to go; Clemens, very much the raging Beast, grabbed Pricopie and raised him high over his head, and over the railing—and *nothing happened !!!*

Pricopie had seen the perfect moment come and go; he had pressed the switch—but the charge had failed to ignite.

Everyone broke for lunch, except for Pricopie, whose extreme disappointment was quite apparent; over our meal, we chatted with Clemens, who had just gone to see Hooper's *The Funhouse* the previous evening (he liked it).

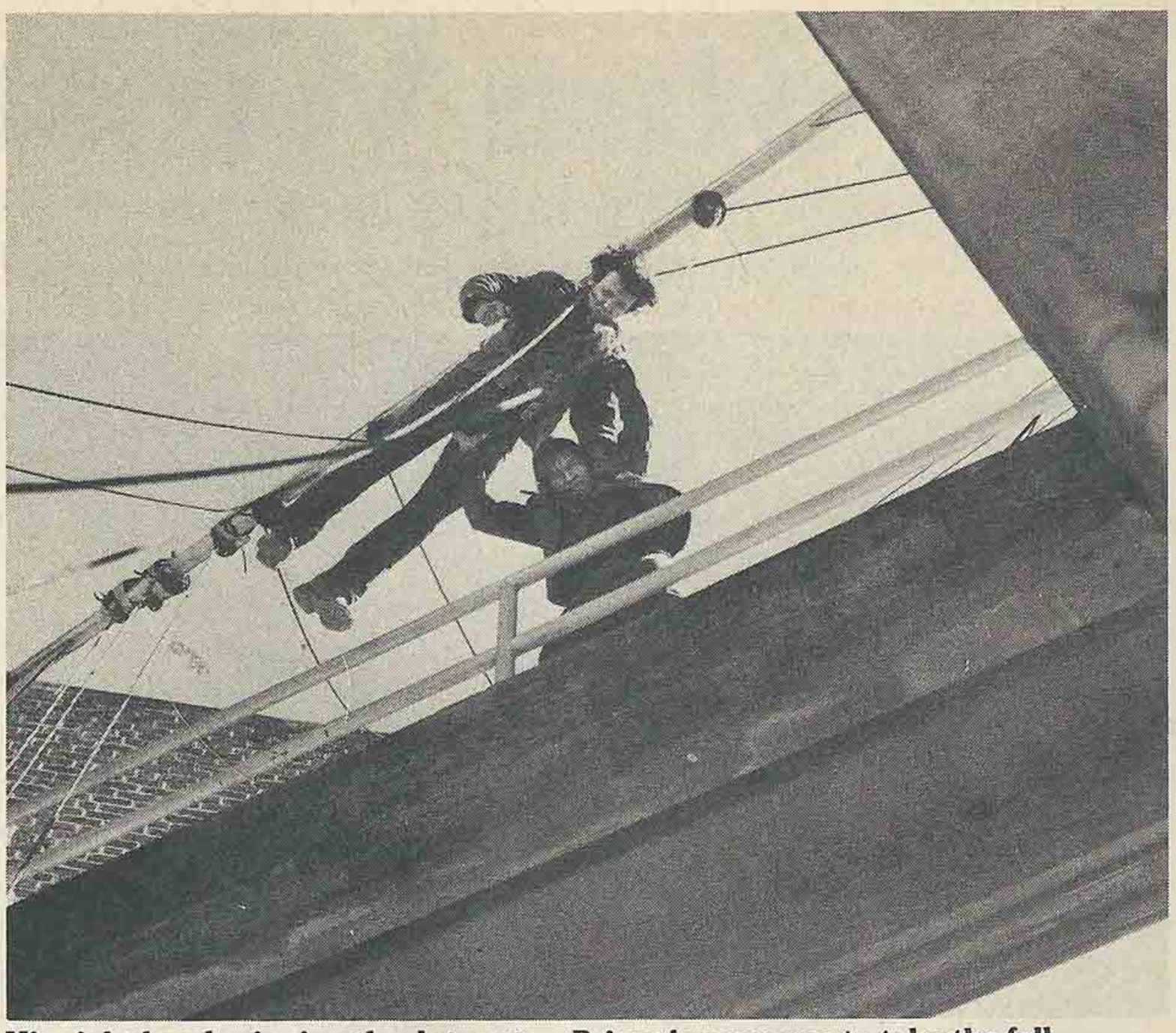
Though few were involved in the day's shooting, virtually the entire cast showed up on location to observe the picture's progress. One of these was Don Gordon, who was also featured in Bernhard's most recent release, *The Final Conflict*, as Damien's personal secretary, whose face is ironed off near the conclusion of the film. Presumably, an equally spectacular demise is in store for Gordon on *The Beast Within*.

"I don't really think of this as a horror picture at all," Gordon said. "It's so tied in with reality—the script, the acting sets it all up so well, that when you get to the horrific aspects, it's gonna be *real*. It's scary, but it's such a part of the whole thing, that there's a tremendous sense of reality involved. The script had that, and that's why I was so attracted to this film.

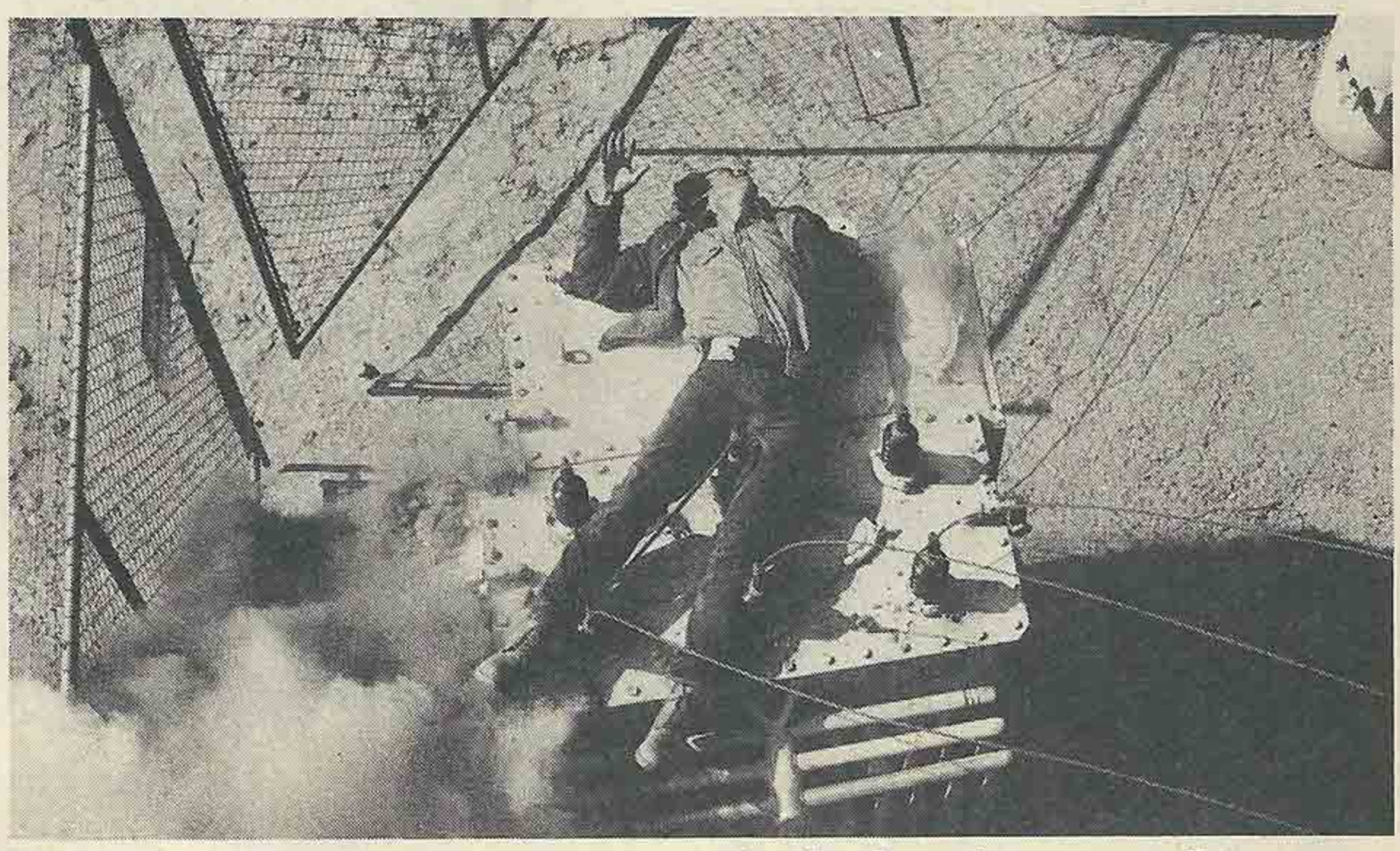
"Harvey told me about this picture when I was in England with him doing *The Final Conflict*. Harvey said, 'You're not quite right for the part of the judge, but I know you'd be good in it.' Later, I met Philippe, and I told him how sick I was of seeing the fat, southern judge, chewing tobacco, and all that. I told him, if I did it, I'd shave my head; Philippe liked the idea, and suggested that for part of the film I wear this real tacky-looking wig, which I do, for the first half of the film. The judge is an important character because he's the only one who knows pretty much what's going on. The judge is more or less in control of the whole town—everybody else is a little afraid of him.

"I really can't say too much more about the role; and again, that's another indication that this isn't just another horror film—it it were, we could all shoot our mouths off. It's very special, and what's made it special is the script, Harvey, Phillipe's direction and the very talented cast."

The rest of the day's shooting went extremely well; later, at the hotel, we were informed that a total of 39 set-ups were shot that day, putting the production a day ahead of schedule. While such a figure doesn't compare with the 50-60 set-ups per day of a Roger Corman, it's still very impressive, considering the time and attention lavished on the three set-ups that we had witnessed.



His right hand gripping the detonator, Pricopie prepares to take the fall.



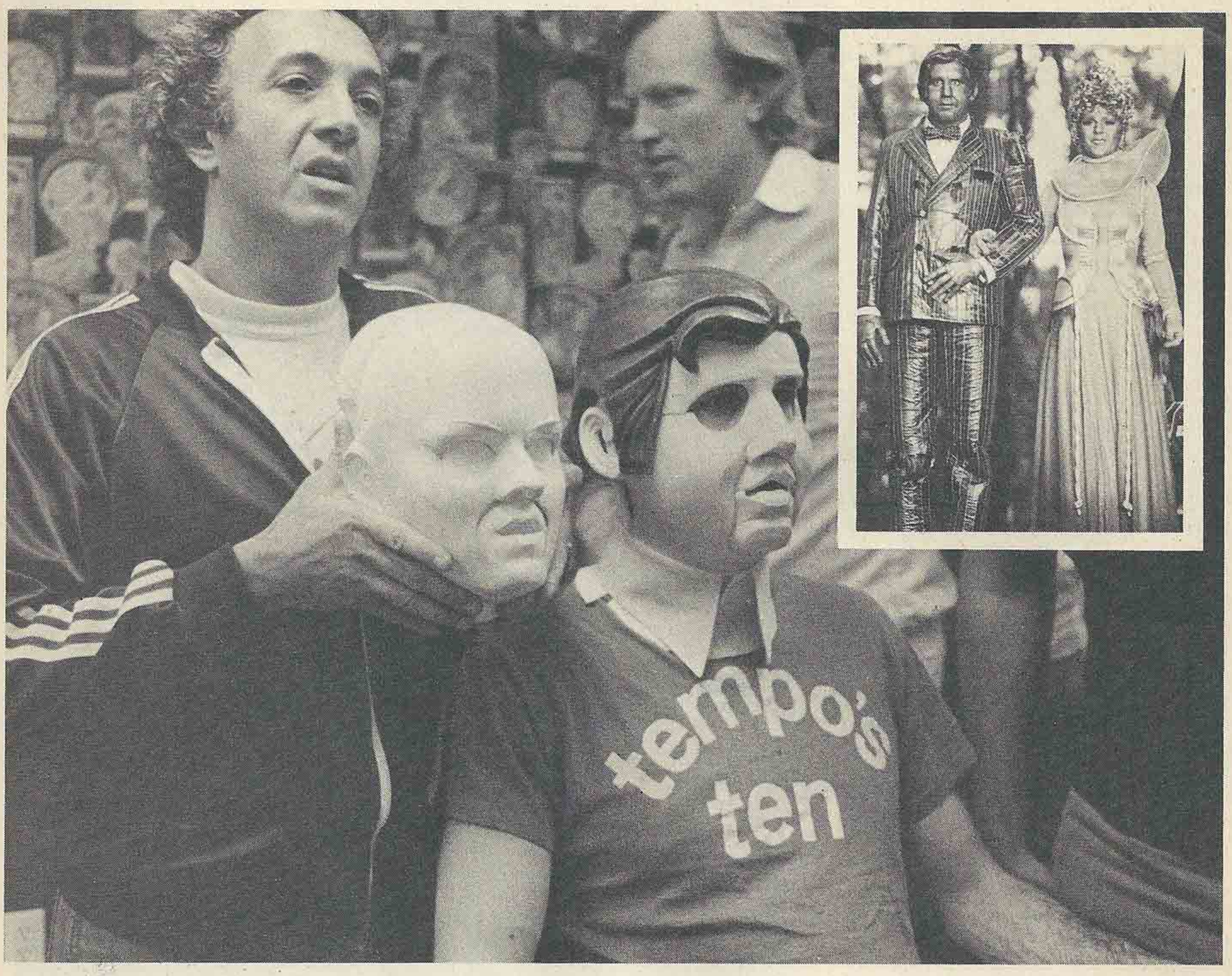
Ron Soble, as Tom Laws, meets a spectacular death on the power coils.

As we come to our leave-taking, and the end of this on-location journal, it seems there are still cast- and crew-members that haven't received the attention they merit; certainly Bibi Besch, who plays the Beast's mom, and Kitty Moffat, as Michael/the Beast's girlfriend, are important characters, and L.Q. Jones, who wrote, produced and directed *A Boy and his Dog*, and plays the local sherrif in *Beast*, is one of the more colorful characters, and would be glad to say a few unpleasant things about Harlan Ellison for us. Most importantly, John Dennis Johnson, who plays the father of Kitty Moffat, is not only a very talented young character actor with a great future, he was also our next-door neighbor at the hotel, and treated us as a friend; but this is already the longest feature FANGORIA has ever published.

At this point, do we even know for sure that *The Beast Within* deserves this much attention? Certainly the entire cast and crew seem happy and confident; and we'd been around long enough to know that these feelings were genuine. Our brief talk with Mora told us that he had a sensibility, and a caring attitude, about film in general, and about the horror film field in particular. If these aren't elements that could fulfill Bernhard's promise of a "classic horror film," then we don't know what could.

Stan Winston

A look at the long and varied career of a premiere make-up effects artist and his latest works: Dead & Buried and *Heartbeeps!*



PHOTOS COURTESY OF STAN WINSTON

By ELLEN CARLOMAGNO

To many, the name Winston brings to mind little more than a brand of cigarettes. However, if you were a director, stuck with the problem of how to realistically depict a person being hit with an axe (without wasting the actor), you just might recall seeing that name printed on a card in your rolodex file under "special make-up effects."

Stan Winston is one of the best make-up effects artists in the business. His list of credits includes some astonishing accomplishments, ranging from old-age make-ups that are so realistic you'd think you'd been through a time-warp (like the make-up he did on Cicely Tyson for *The Autobiography of Miss Jane Pittman.),* and mechanical masks with complete facial articulation (like the wookiees in the *Star Wars Christmas Special;* to the rotting flesh of the gruesome walking dead in *Dead & Buried.* His work feeds the imagination, and helps it to take over where reality might not be the most practical way to convey an idea.

Winston got into the make-up business almost on a fluke. He had gone to the University of Virginia as a Fine Arts major with a Drama minor, and acted with the Virginia Players. When he graduated in 1968, he came to California to be an actor. "I was gonna be a star—somebody was going to discover me," he laughs, "but I couldn't find an agent." While looking for one, he had to so something for his daily bread—and he didn't want to park cars. Winston had always done his own make-up with the Virginia Players. In fact, since the Virginia Players had no real make-up department as such, Winston invented one, and thus did a lot of the others' make up too; so he called around to the major studios seeking a way to apply this background.

He finally reached the head of MGM's make-up department, Bill Tuttle (one of only two make-up artists to have won an Oscar—for *The Seven Faces of Dr. Lao.)* Winston never met him face-fo-face, but over the phone Tuttle told him about the Association of Motion Picture and Television Producers' make-up apprentice program (which no longer exists). He applied, and out of 200 applicants was one of two accepted into the program (the other man was Jim Phillips, who, tragically, was killed in the plane crash that claimed the lives of most of the crew of the *Primal Man* television series).

For Winston's apprenticeship, he was placed at Walt Disney Productions to

Winston, left, working on Andy Kaufman's make-up for Universal's *Heartbeeps.* Inset: the finished makeup.

serve three years under veteran make-up artist Robert Schiffer. With Schiffer as his mentor, Winston learned all about the subtleties of character make-up and make-up laboratory work. "I learned a tremendous amount from Bob," says Winston, "he's a real artist."

Six thousand hours after he started at Disney, his apprenticeship was over; and he was hearing word around of a movie that was to be made for television called *Gargoyles*. "I just really begged for that job," he recalls, "To show that I could sculpt and design characters." Bob Schiffer recommended Winston to Del Armstrong, who was in charge of the make-up on the picture, and Winston was hired to design the background creatures for the film. "Ellis Burman designed the principal gargoyles and the main character, played by Bernie Casey; and as the show went on, due to my growing friendship with Bernie, I ended up actually applying his make-up." Winston also made the teeth that Casey wore in the movie.

As is usual with many TV productions, the time alotted to design the creatures was precious little; but what eventually went on the screen in *Gargoyles* was phenominal—at least that's how the Academy of Television Arts and Sciences saw it, because they awarded the three make-up artists, Del Armstrong, Ellis Burman, and Stan Winston an Emmy for their efforts.

The following year, the company that did *Gargoyles*, Tomorrow Entertainment, was doing another television movie. This one was called *The Autobiography of Miss Jane Pittman;* and they again called upon talents of Winston's. His job was to transform actress Cicely Tyson into the 110-year-old Jane Pittman—gradually.

There were three stages of aging, and Winston had the good fortune to have working with him Rick Baker, "who's a very talented guy," he smiles. Winston had Baker do the two younger stages so that he could devote the better part of his own energies to the oldest stage—the 110-year-old woman.

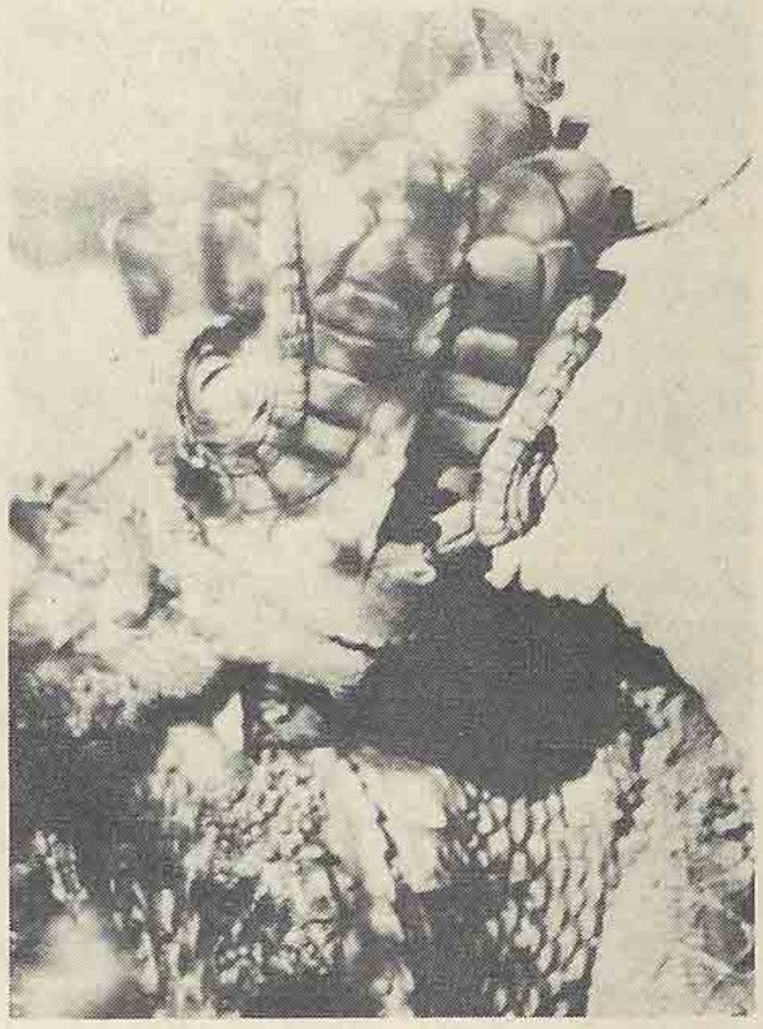
Winston and Baker designed for a month and a half, which was, by normal frenetic TV standards, a huge amount of time. "The extent of the make-up was massive," says Winston of the final stage, "there were so many pieces. The actual application of the make-up took five hours, but Rick and I, working together, got it down to three-and-a-half to four by the end of the shooting." Winston even designed scleral contact lenses—lenses that cover the entire eye—which aged Tyson's eyes, giving them the amber color that is so prevalent in the way a black person's eyes age. He collected is second Emmy for the job he did on *Jane Pittman*.

Winston has been responsible for the age make-up on a number of outstanding shows, not the least of which was Alex Haley's *Roots*, for which he aged Ben Vereen, Chuck Connors, Leslie Uggams, Sandy Duncan, and Olivia Cole for their portrayals. He's also done some remarkable character make-up as for the film *W.C. Fields and Me*, in which Rod Steiger played Fields; and for Diana Ross' TV special where Winston transformed the star into three different women from black history and show business: Josephine Baker, Bussie Smith, and Ethyl Waters.

We asked him about the reactions of actors to his make-ups. He replies, "Often, if an actor has never been in an extensive make-up like that, he (or she) will feel ahead of time that it will hinder their performance; but in reality, it does just the opposite—it enhances it. Almost every actor I've put into an extensive make-up has, after seeing that they look the part, seemd to *become* the age of the character they resemble." Winston cites Cicely Tyson's performance as the aged Jane Pittman as the ultimate in this sort of experience. "When she was in make-up she was 110 years old. I had to help her down the stairs from the make-up room; and she was never out of character until she was out of the make-up. That's why it looked as good as it did. As much as I'd like to take a pat on the back for the job, the person who really sold it was Cicely."

Winston had mainly done only prosthetic character make-ups—that is, until Diana Ross recommended him to the producers of the motion picture version of *The Wiz*. He ended up designing all the characters for the film. "I worked with Tony Walton, who designed the production and costumes, and I did the faces," says Winston, "I got into mechanically articulated faces for the first time on the flying monkey characters. The special effects department at Universal worked with me on that."

The flying monkeys' faces had enormous capabilities; but unfortunately were never utilized to their fullest potential, as was the case for much of the production in the film; which was one of the many failings of the picture. Yet, though it wasn't a commercial success, it was one of the biggest make-up pictures in history, ranking



Clockwise from left: Nipsey Russell from *The Wiz*, Winston's first work on *Gargoyles*, Rod Steiger as W.C. Fields and Marvel's Howard the Duck.

right up there with the original *The Wizard of Oz*, and *Planet of the Apes* in its extent.

The real test of Winston's ability to design mechanically articulated masks came when Smith-Hemion Productions approached him to do a family of wookiees for Lucasfilms *The Star Wars Christmas Special*. (Stuart Freeborn, who originally designed Chewbacca, was busy on *Superman* at the time, and was unable to do it himself).

The Burmans were going to assist Winston with the mechanics, but as it turned out, both Ellis and Tom had to be out of town on another production, so he was left to his own devices. "The producers actually came to me wanting me to make a baby Chewbacca and then they wanted me to take the original Chewbacca mask and put a make-up on it for Chewy's wife, and then paint it grey and make it an old man wookiee. I told them I thought that idea was absurd. So I ended up designing an entire family." The Wookiees Winston created are probably the most articulated self-contained faces that have ever been done. Even Stuart Freeborn was impressed.

Winston's career has taken its downsweeps, as has that of every other notable in any business. At one point, Winston wanted to be a producer. He was going to do a horror film called *The Unseen*. Says Winston, "I was a 'motion picture producer'—and I mean with a lot of *style*," he chuckles, "sitting behind my desk, not knowing what I was doing, and quickly going broke." For a period of a little over six months, Winston turned down jobs telling people he was no longer in the make-up business, and did in fact go broke. Fortunately, another producer came in and paid Winston the amount of cash he had in the picture, taking it off his hands (*The Unseen* was finally produced—by someone—but hasn't yet received domestic distribution at the time of this writing).

Winston has also had his share of artistic differences. When things started settling down from the turmoil of his producing exploits, he started to build the studio he now occupies. The first job he took in his new shop was Aspen Productions' *The Final Countdown*. His work was never on screen. "I aged Katharine Ross and James Farentino, and the consensus was that Farentino wasn't recognizable enough, and Ross looked too old." From Winston's point of view, the problem was they they never tested the make-up to work out the kinks. "I wanted to do it again, but they pulled in another make-up artist, Charlie Schram, who did it in straight [as opposed to prosthetic] make-up." It was the first time in Winston's career that he had ever been replaced. "They spent a lot of money to have me do it, so I felt a great deal of responsibility toward the motion picture company." Winston didn't know then that he would eventually be able to redeem himself.

His redemption came when the same company, Aspen Productions, came to him several months later with another project, Dan O'Bannon's *Dead & Buried*. I felt very bad about what had happened with *Countdown*, so I really wanted to do some wonderful things—very selfishly—so that I wouldn't have people bad-mouthing my work."

Dead & Buried promises to contain some of the most startling effects done to date. "I've developed some things that no one's ever seen before, and I'm very proud of the work I did," says Winston.

Included among the effects in O'Bannon's story are a severed arm that comes to life; an amazing scene in which a woman's face is restored from crushed bone and shredded sinew back to its normal attractive state; and "a lot of rotting flesh. I did a lot of rotting for that movie," laughs Winston, who has not yet seen the finished product. "I have not idea how good the movie is—or if in fact it isn't."

The effects in *Dead & Buried* are a result of combining everything Winston had learned up to that point. Learning experiences such as the effect he did for *The Exterminator* were forerunners, as are most pieces previous to an artist's present work. The effect in *The Exterminator* was visible for only an instant, and considering the work that went into making that instant possible, it almost seems not worth the energy spent; but for soon-to-be-obvious reasons, Winston didn't think of it that way.

The Exterminator is a grisly tale of a crazed Viet Nam vet running rampant in New York, snuffing out the low-life. "What I did was an insert, actually, after the film had been completed. It was a decapitation scene."

The job was one that Tom Burman had accepted, but found he was too busy to do himself; so rather than tell the producers he couldn't do it, he offered it to Winston. "I think Tom mentioned that we would possibly work together on it anyway," says Winston. "Tom did all the other effects for that scene—a couple of bullet hits and a cut throat—and the decapitation effect I did."

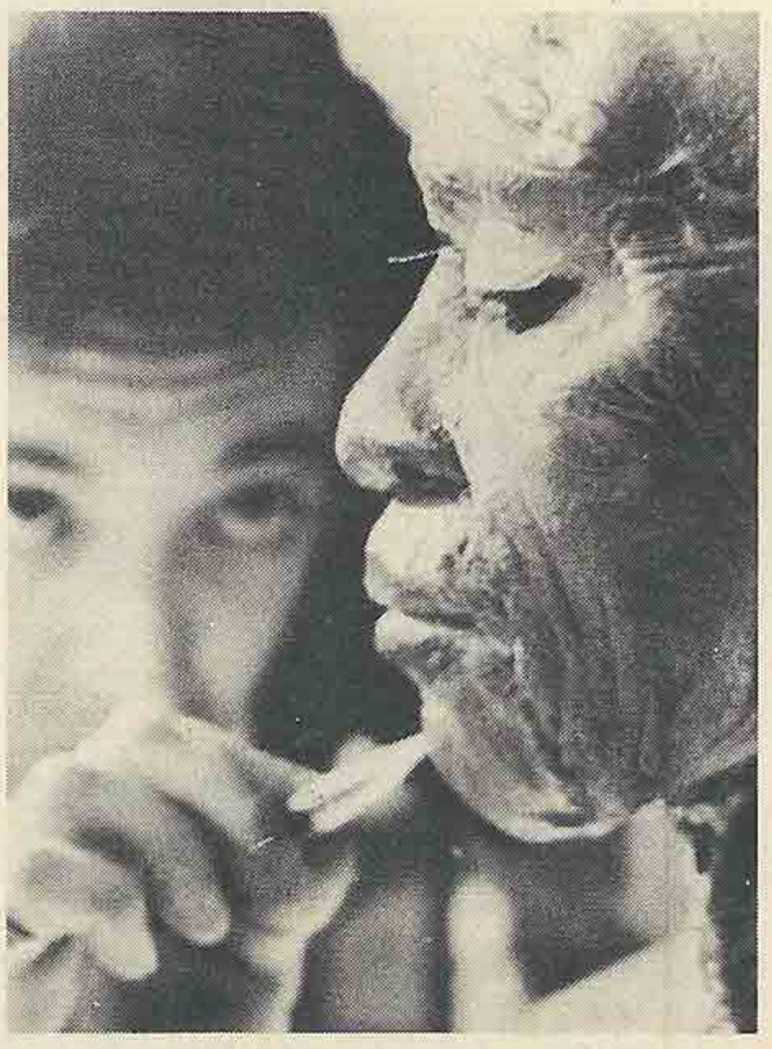
The original concept was to have the victim of the beheading scream as he was decapitated. "I discussed it with Tom, and we both felt that it would be more exciting if the decapitation wasn't done cleanly—that is, to have the head severed, but still attached to the body, dangling. We've seen so many decapitations, we wanted to avoid people saying 'oh boy, here comes another one, Ho Hum. . . .' " The effect was indeed quite animated, but for all intents and purposes, was just a little too gory to be shown in its entirety in the final cut of the film. "It was fun to do anyway, and a good exercise, because it was very difficult. I designed it so they could shoot it over and over again. The head was literally hinged so it cold come back up and the seam wouldn't show when the machete went through the neck." At least a dozen takes were shot from different angles, and the hinge idea turned out to be a good one.

The body of the "victim" was fiberglass, hinged at all the joints so that it could "convulse." Everything was controlled by cables and air pressure tubes that went through the body and up through the neck into the face. "It was literally pulling strings to operate the eyes rolling back into the head, and the eyelid and jaw movement for the scream."

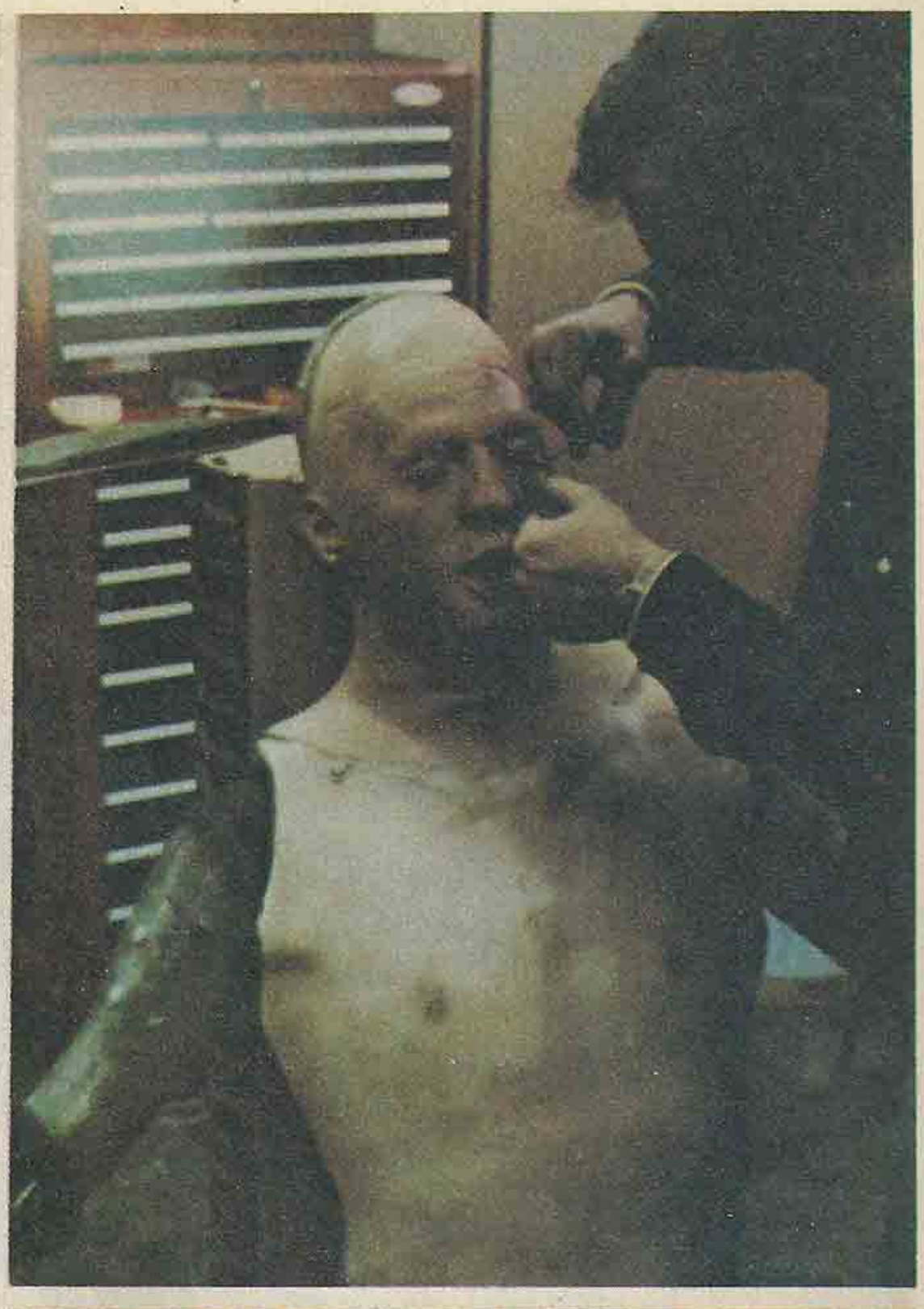
The initial mold off the actor's body was a plaster bandage, and from that, a fiberglass cast was made. A series of different molds for the body sheet was used; and a series of different urethanes. The substructure was fiberglass, and all of the mechanics were contained within. The facial substructure was also fiberglass.

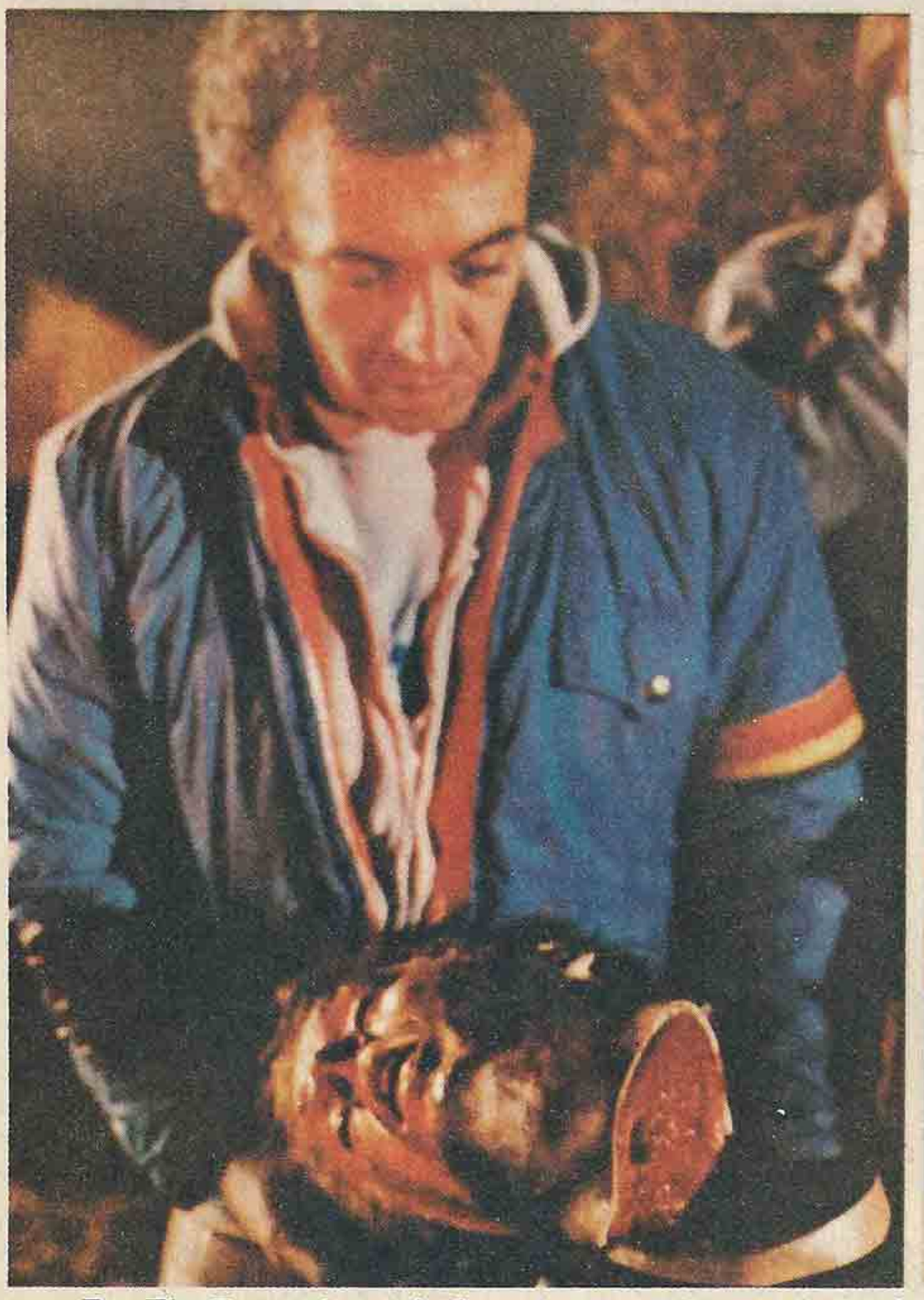
The main difficulty was having the mechanics of the eyes and mouth continue working with the head in various positions—dangling, or upright. There was a series of springs within the cable formation that allowed everything to bend and still operate properly.

Perfecting the head effect took about



Cicely Tyson becomes 110 year old Jane Pittman under Winston's skill





For *The Exterminator*'s decapitation, Winston devised a head that could be reassembled for additional takes.

Top left: Winston at work in his studio. Top right, bottom left: two examples of Winston's fantasy modelling. Bottom right: Winston's walls are lined with various examples of his expert craftsmanship.

two months. "I had Vince Prentiss, James Cummins and Carl Cobery in the lab with me. Tom helped with the final painting, and on the set there were seven of us in this little hut operating the body—keeping the blood pumping, air gurgling through the trachea, and the breathing going."

The beheading effect itself was on screen for a mere second or two at the most. "What you finally saw," describes Winston, "was the knife go through the neck—and heard the scream as it went through, and then they cut to another scene, which I thought was quite intelligent on their part. As I said, it was a fun effect to figure out, but not something you would want to sit and watch.

Something you *will* want to sit and watch is Winston's latest finished effort (which will be out probably around Christmastime), Universal's *Heartbeeps*, starring Andy Kauffman and Bernadette Peters.

Heartbeeps takes place in the not-so-distant future, and is about two human-like robots who meet in the maintenance warehouse and fall in love. They decide to take a walk in the moonlight, and are joined by another robot, an annoying chap named Catskill who speaks only in one-liners. The three of them manage to get lost, and go through one adventure after another in their attempt to get back to the warehouse. The movie was filmed on location in Northern California, and at Universal.

The three principal characters were designed and sculpted at Winston's studio by himself (Peters' character), Mike McCracken (Kauffman's character), and Stan's associate James Kagel, who did Catskill, the third principal.

The faces of Peters' and Kaufman's characters are stylized caricatures of the actors, done entirely in prosthetic appliances, and Catskill was a mechanically articulated overhead mask. The appliances were made of a transparent gelatin, colored with pearl-essence metal colors, that covered every inch of the face, except for the eyes. "We tried to avoid a rubbery look, and what we came up with is a translucent look that's really like nothing I've ever seen before. Kind of a combination of metal and plastic. You couldn't look at it and say for sure if it was one or the other."

It was a grueling make-up; very rough on those who had to wear it. "Everyone was very professional, considering what they had to go through," says Winston. Due to the fact that the appliances were made of gelatin, there were many melting problems "At one point or another, production would have to halt to re-do the part of the face that had melted off." To facilitate the patch-ups, there was a crew in the lab at Universal running the pieces (with back-ups) every day.

The actors' strike occured during the filming of *Heartbeeps* but as Winston explains, it was a blessing in disguise for his crew. "We had been trying to perfect the process of quickly producing the appliances halfway into the shooting. When the strike came, it gave us all a chance to take a breath and get everything reorganized."

According to Winston, there was a phenominal group involved with the actual application of the make-ups during the shoot. "Vince Prentiss did Andy Kauffman's make-up, and did a superb job. Zoltan Elek ran the show on the set and applied Bernadette's make-up. Both of them added to my designs with their application. They really did a great job."

Next on the cinematic drawing board for Winston is a project he is quite excited about, since he has helped cultivate it from the beginning. The picture is *Howard the Duck* (of comic book fame). At the moment, everything is in the development stages, but Winston gets very animated when he speaks of the project. "As far as the character goes," he goes on, "Howard would be a combination of suit and puppetry; a combination of the technology that went into Stuart Freeborn's Yoda, that went into Chewbacca, that went into my wookiees and *Exterminator*, and every-

Continued on Page 70.

Before Cronenberg. . .

Before Romero. . .

There was. . .

The Wizard of Gore

Herschell G. Lewis
interviewed by Randy Palmer

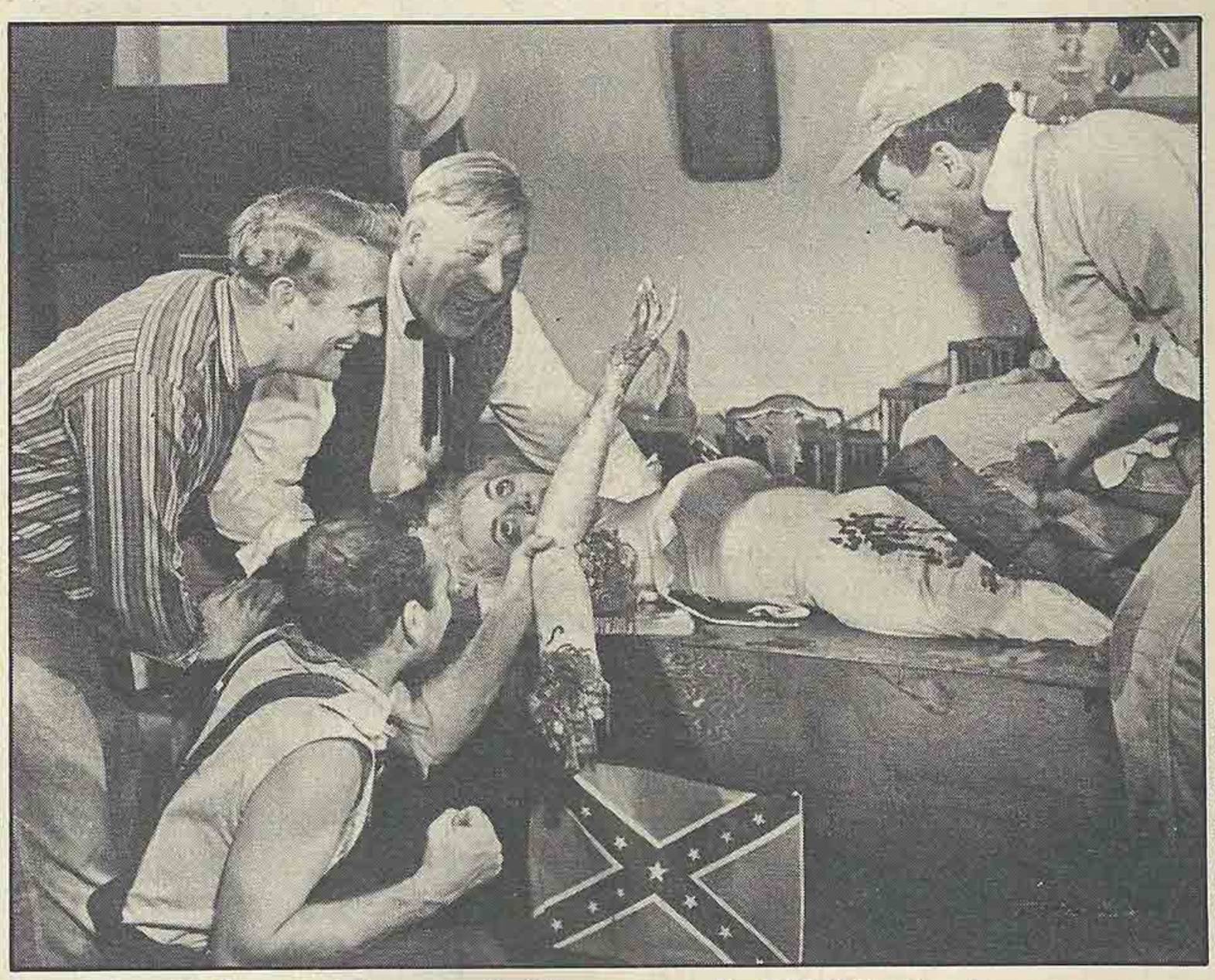
Long before Linda Blair made pea soup famous in *The Exorcist*; before the red gushers of *The Omen*; even before the murderous frenzy of David Cronenberg's *Rabid* or the zombie terror of George Romero's *Night of the Living Dead*, there was a man named Herschell Gordon Lewis who was jovially paralyzing audiences with his own brand of bloodthirsty butchery. The three Ds were the mainstay of his hard-core gore films: disfigurement, dismemberment and disembowelment. At this director's hands, scores of victims were torn limb from limb as the camera zoomed in for extreme close-ups of wet, pulsing innards. What kind of man could gleefully devise such repulsive atrocities for movie patrons to shudder at?

You are about to find out.

Back in the early 60s, while American International Pictures' horror cycle was peaking with films like *House of Usher* and *The Pit and the Pendulum*, Lewis was making sub-low-budget "nudies"—sexploitation pictures, often set in nudist camps, that seem almost innocent compared to today's X-rated fare. But this type of film soon lost its challenge.

"In early 1963 I felt the nudie cycle was going in the wrong direction," says Lewis. "There are only a certain number of ways you can show girls playing basketball! So I decided to shoot a completely different kind of film in Miami— *Blood Feast*.

"Any pioneering effort gets more attention," Lewis says, commenting on his first and most popular gore feature. "Look at the orientation of the audience when *Blood Feast* first hit them. They'd *never* seen anything like this! Now that we've made five or six of them—the same people have seen them—there's been a certain amount of notoriety; the novelty value is gone. That's why the first two, *Blood Feast* and *Two Thousand Maniacs!*, got the most attention, even though the later ones, like *The Gore-Gore Girls*, are much more polished pictures."



ALL PHOTOS: COURTESY R. PALMER

What a bunch of cut-ups! Some good ol' boys among the *2,000 Maniacs!*

The Wiz himself, H. G. Lewis.

Roasty Reception

Blood Feast, which concerns a madman's effort to bring an Egyptian goddess to life by stealing the internal organs of young and beautiful women, received a warm reception from the critics—it was roasted. "Amateur night at the butcher shop", was one wry comment; "Thoroughly revolting grade-Z horror garbage" was another. But audiences flocked to see it, just as Lewis had anticipated.

"I remember we had some anxious moments in the cutting of the film, when people would wander into the cutting room and throw up, or fall down or turn green, and I'd say, 'What's happening here?' We were working so closely with it that we didn't realize the effect it would have on other people. So at one point we looked at each other and said, 'Where can we play this film? At a Halloween midnight show?' We had second thoughts about the playability of the picture; we thought we had gone *too* far!"

Apparently, others felt the same way; at one point there was a rumor circulating that the authorities had seized all prints of *Blood Feast* because of the picture's extreme violence.

"Definitely not true!" exclaims Lewis. "What actually happened was that another fellow involved with the picture, Stan Kohlberg, bought our interests in the film. Kohlberg, who is something of a maniac, took the picture and tried to cut the titles off and put his name on it! He thought he could do this and become a celebrity, but he did it four or five years after the picture was released, and in the trade it's well-known who actually made

***The Blood Feast*—is this how *Alien*'s chest-burster got started?**

the picture. The funny thing is, Kohlberg's the type of man to whom you might say, 'That's the worst picture I ever saw,' and he would think he's being complimented!"

Following *Blood Feast*, Lewis immediately began work on *Two Thousand Maniacs!*, his second most (in)famous gore film.

"*Two Thousand Maniacs!* is a far more polished production than *Blood Feast*," contends Lewis. "But in terms of box-office performance, it never came close to *Blood Feast*'s returns But *Two Thousand Maniacs!* is a very good, strong picture. It was well-received critically, if you can believe it, which is rare for a picture on my kind of budget."

Lewis laughs. "You know, to this day, when I make a gore film, my friends sometimes refuse to sit through it! The box-office record of *Blood Feast* made enough splash in both trade and consumer press that it made me respectable among those who otherwise might have criticized that particular picture. But among my own friends—they're all as strange as I am—they like to come out on the set, become involved or hang around at screenings—even if they do ostentatiously walk out in the middle."

Different & Outrageous

But why make films that are so offensive to many people's sensibilities?

"Why not? Suppose, instead of the kind of film we'd made, we made one which was more of a suspense story—with our budget, with the calibre of actors we had at our disposal, and the eight-day shooting schedule we had for *Blood Feast!* We *had* to do something different, something outrageous; something the major companies wouldn't dare make! So I deliberately set out to make *Blood Feast* this way.

"But I can't imagine anyone taking it too seriously, although there are those who do. To this day, I get crank letters on *Blood Feast!* Some people just can't understand that such a picture could have been made by civilized people."

Often, the acting in Lewis' films receives even more criticism than their display of violence.

"You know, I don't try to hide the fact that I use friends as actors in my pictures," Lewis admits. "Some of my friends have about as much acting talent as an old boot, but they're still more talented than some professionals. Sid Reeth, who was my partner in *A Taste of Blood* and played a lawyer in that picture, was *so* bad I had to cut all but two or three of his lines which were necessary for the plot.

"I remember when Dave Friedman [Lewis' producer/partner] and I had an argument about a girl named Connie Mason, who had the lead role in *Maniacs* and *Blood Feast*. Well, Dave was enchanted with this girl—but she couldn't act! And we ended up using her anyway. She had a very sexy smile, one with about 65 teeth; she was an ex-*Playboy* model, you know. She played the only girl who survived *Blood Feast* intact."

Another difficulty in directing the amateur cast arose when filming the movie's climax. "The heavy is being chased down the Miami garbage dump," says Lewis, "but no matter how hard I yelled and screamed, the actors who played the police kept *passing* him, as if it were some kind of contest! Ultimately, we had to piece the thing together from different takes.

"But I don't take the role of the actor in a low-budget picture that seriously, especially if it's a 'specialty' picture like ours, where the audience concentrates on the gore more than the acting. Nor do I believe that the acting in our pictures is all that bad. But if I need somebody who can ride a motorcycle, look respectably pretty and act, I hire the person based on those three items in that order. If she's a magnificent creature who can't ride a motorcycle, she's out. If she's the world's greatest actress but not pretty, she's out.

This woman used to be all thumbs—until she ran into *2,000 Maniacs!*

Snakes, Worms & Entrails

"When we shot *A Taste of Blood* I had a Britisher who was supposed to play the part of a sailor. Come shooting time, he didn't show. We were to be shooting aboard a boat, and we had one hour to get on board, shoot the scene and get off, or the longshoremen were going to throw our equipment into the water—so I ended up taking the part myself!"

Lewis also recalls an incident involving a living prop used in filming *Blood Feast*: "Dave Friedman had a thing for snakes. He loved snakes! So from the Miami Serpentarium we rented a boa constrictor. We decided to shoot the snake scene that night on the beach by the Suez Hotel at 182nd Street and Collins Avenue. This is the scene in which the maniac rips the brains out of this girl's head. This girl was another *Playboy* girl and she didn't have any brains to be ripped out, so we had to fake it. As a matter of fact, we had explained carefully to her what the scene was all about and she went out and had her hair done that day!

"Anyway, we got on the beach and we started fooling around with the shooting and, lo and behold, somebody let go of the snake, which then went scuttling off down the beach. All I could see was the next day's headlines: 'Child Squashed to Death by Boa Constrictor at Beach Resort'. That snake was out of the line of lights immediately. It was pitch black. And to his eternal credit Scott Hall, who played the police captain, took off after the snake with a film box and threw the box over the snake's head. And apparently snakes, when it goes dark on them, stop. So we recovered our snake, somewhat sandy, but none the worse for wear.

"Then, when we were shooting *Color Me Blood Red*, there's a scene where we dig up this girl and there's supposed to be worms crawling all over her. We shot the film in Sarasota and we didn't know until the day before we were going to shoot that there *are* no worms in Sarasota. The soil is too sandy. There are simply no worms to be had! So we went to a retirement village and, sure enough, here's a guy there who raises worms for a hobby! So he *loaned* us—he wouldn't sell us any worms, they were his *pets*!—he *loaned* us 24 worms. We shot the scene that night; we didn't finish until 1:30 in the morning. Everyone was exhausted; we started gathering up the worms. We could only find 23 worms. One worm was missing. We're scrounging around through this sandy loam trying to find the other worm. So finally somebody in the crew said, 'I'll give ya 24 worms!' And he took one worm with a knife and cut it in half! I said, 'Alright, friend, you now have 24 worms; *you're* the guy who's going to return them tomorrow!' And he did, and nobody ever said anything. Maybe the fellow didn't look to see he had two short worms in the batch!

"On that same picture we had the gore, the animal entrails, which we had sent up from a packing plant in Tampa, stuffed in a refrigerator. Well, the power went off one day and we could smell that stuff three blocks away! But we had to use this stuff. One of the things we had was a cow's head which we shaped with mortician's wax to make into a man's head. We had to have the teeth and the eye sockets and some of the other components. And we stuffed it with styrofoam so it wouldn't sink. This was for the motorboat scene where the villian harpoons a couple of swimmers and then runs over them with a motorboat. And here we were working with this thing which, no matter how much we sprayed it with Pinesol, the smell came oozing through! Come time to shoot, we threw it in the water and it—it really did—it sank so fast we didn't even see it go down! So we gave up on that shot. Then we decided, well, let's use pieces of meat. We started throwing meat in the water and suddenly we had about 3,000 seagulls swooping down and scooping this meat out of the water. A piece of meat wouldn't even hit the water and the gulls had it! So we gave up on *that* shot! These are some of the unforeseen events which sometimes affect the course of human destiny."

Herschell Lewis' Horror Films'

Blood Feast (1963)
Two Thousand Maniacs! (1964)
Color Me Blood Red (1966)
A Taste of Blood (1967)
Something Weird (1968)
Gruesome Twosome (1969)
Wizard of Gore (1970)
The Gore-Gore Girls [aka Blood Orgy] (1972)

A tense dramatic highlight from *Color Me Blood Red*.

In the same film, a frenzied artist paints a crimson masterpiece.

The *only* reason to attend a Lewis gore film is to enjoy the stomach-churning effects—if you can!

"Mild" Gore?

Lewis has not concentrated exclusively on gore. There were other subjects, such as *The Pill*.

"Actually, the full title is *A Girl, a Boy & the Pill*. I also made *Blast-Off Girls*, about the girls who follow rock-'n'-roll bands. There's also a picture called *This Stuff'll Kill Ya*, about a moonshine ring run by a fake preacher and his fake congregation. We had a couple of mild gore effects in there. In that particular case, I had a girl stoned to death, an effect originally planned for *Two Thousand Maniacs!* but which we couldn't get to work at the time. It worked this time because we shot it at night, not in the daytime, so some of the problems we might've had didn't crop up. We had a textured stone which, when it hit the girl in the face, looked for all the world as if it had bruised the living daylights out of her and scraped the skin. *That* worked! And we had a scene where two girls were crucified, but that was done off-camera. We 'discovered' them. We also had a man's head blown off. We did that with a face mask over a dummy and some dynamite to blow it out."

(This is "mild" gore?)

"Others I've made," he continues, "were *Suburban Roulette*, *Year of the Yahoo*, *Miss Nymphet's Zap-In*, the early nudies and a picture I like, and nobody else does, called *Just for the Hell of It*. That was about a bunch of kids who smash things. That was made in 1968 and I believe it was ahead of its time. I may bring it back someday."

And, finally, what about future film projects?

"Right now I'm in preproduction on several pictures. One is *Galaxy Girls*—a different kind of picture altogether. *Galaxy Girls* is about some girls who come from a planet where sex is food; that is, they must have sex to live—it's their nourishment. But the men on their planet look like suitcases! They're beamed to Earth—it's a comedy. I don't know quite when I'm going to do it, or even where for that matter. There's no nudity in it; it's strictly a comedy and I guess I'll probably get a PG rating from the MPAA, but I won't complain if I get an R."

One last question: When and where were you born?

"I was born in Pittsburgh on June 15, 1926. Does that mean you'll send me a birthday present?"

"... She didn't have any brains to be ripped out, so we faked it..."

PHOTOS: © 1981 Paramount Pictures

Jason's the sort of boy who simply worships his mother, as in this candle-lit altar scene.

Friday the 13th Part II

Jason returns to avenge his Mom, with an all-new set of camper-victims—Producer-Director Steve Miner promises more of the same (only better!).

By JAMES H. BURNS

The surprise hit of the 1980 film season was Sean Cunningham's *Friday the 13th*, a low-budget "horror" entry produced by Georgetown Productions. The terror flick shocked Paramount Pictures, who had picked it up for release to make a few quick bucks with the drive-in crowd, when I evolved into the 20th-largest grossing film of the year (topping Filmways' and Brian DePalma's so-called *major* motion picture, *Dressed to Kill*).

Friday the 13th told the plight of a group of counselors being murdered one by one at Camp Crystal Lake. The camp's "curse" and killer turned out to be Mrs. Vorhees (Betsy Palmer), the mother of a "hideously deformed boy," Jason, who had drowned in the camp's lake over twenty years earlier because of two counselor's negligence. After a suspenseful showdown, Mrs. Vorhees was decapitated by the one surviving teenager, Alice (Adrienne King).

Friday the 13th Part II picks up with Alice, safely in her own home, dreaming of the terrifying nightmare that she endured at Camp Crystal Lake. Aroused from her nap, Alice goes to the refreigerator to fetch her cat a snack, only to find Mrs. Vorhees' severed head staring wickedly back at her. From out of nowhere, a mysterious stranger thrusts an icepick through the base of Alice's nose, signalling the start of Jason's revenge . . .

Friday the 13th Part II's main plot line begins five years later as a group of young adults are making their way to a counselor training session at Lake Region, a settlement in the same area as *Part I*'s "Camp Blood." When the majority of youths leave for a night at a local music club, it isn't long before Jason's reign of terror begins.

"We set out to make the most terrifying film *ever*," says *Friday the 13th Part II*'s producer-director, Stever Miner (who also served as the original's associate producer and unit production manager). "I know that every horror director says that, but I really think we did it. I set out to *top Friday the 13th*. So far, we've had some very successful screenings."

Thoughts of a *Friday the 13th* sequel began occuring to Georgetown Productions immediately upon the film's prosperous opening week last spring. At that time, Steve Miner was in Rome working with director Wes Craven (*Last House on the Left, Stranger in the House*) on pre-production for a movie entitled *Marimba* (temporarily suspended but still in development). Plans for *Friday the 13th Part II* became definite last July when Georgetown decided to begin shooting in September, enabling Paramount to capitalize on the original's audience by releasing a sequel only one year after the first film's premiere.

"Because Georgetown wanted to shoot the sequel so quickly, Sean (Cunningham) wasn't going to be able to do it," recalls Miner. "Sean was busy preparing a lot of projects at other studios. I was originally approached to only *produce* the sequel, but it soon became clear to me that I would do as good a job at directing *Part II* as anybody else could. I was familiar with the first film and I've been a fan of horror movies all of my life. This would be the first time that I directed a theatrical feature, but I had done second unit directing on a couple of the movies that I've produced and I'd also directed some industrial films. I think I understood what the first picture's audience *and* fans of the genre wanted in the second chapter."

Producing and directing *Friday the 13th Part II* would prove to be a difficult task. Many horror enthusiasts felt that the initial movie offered nothing more than its grotesque murders and, inherently, another opportunity to marvel at the work of makeup master Tom Savini. These fans thought that the killings weren't supported by enough true plot substance.

"*Friday the 13th* worked *well*," Miner counters. "The enjoyment with this kind of

film is audience participation. The audience didn't even mind the dumb stuff, because they could *talk back* to it. They really stayed with the story. What *does* happen with a lot of these movies is that they have terrific ad campaigns but then don't deliver. I don't think that that was the case with *Friday the 13th*, because business continued strong for weeks and weeks. Practically all of the advertising money was spend during its first week of release, which means that its continued success was based on good word of mouth. Everybody that I've talked to really can't wait to see the sequel.

"In my film, Jason looks much different," Miner states, "but that could be because he's five years older now. Yet he's not the living dead, as some rumors have speculated. *I* think that Jason survived his drowning. That's how I approached it, but that doesn't mean that Alice saw the *real* Jason. In *Part II*, Jason doesn't talk like Mrs. Vorhees was imitating him. In fact, in this movie, Jason can't or at least doesn't, talk."

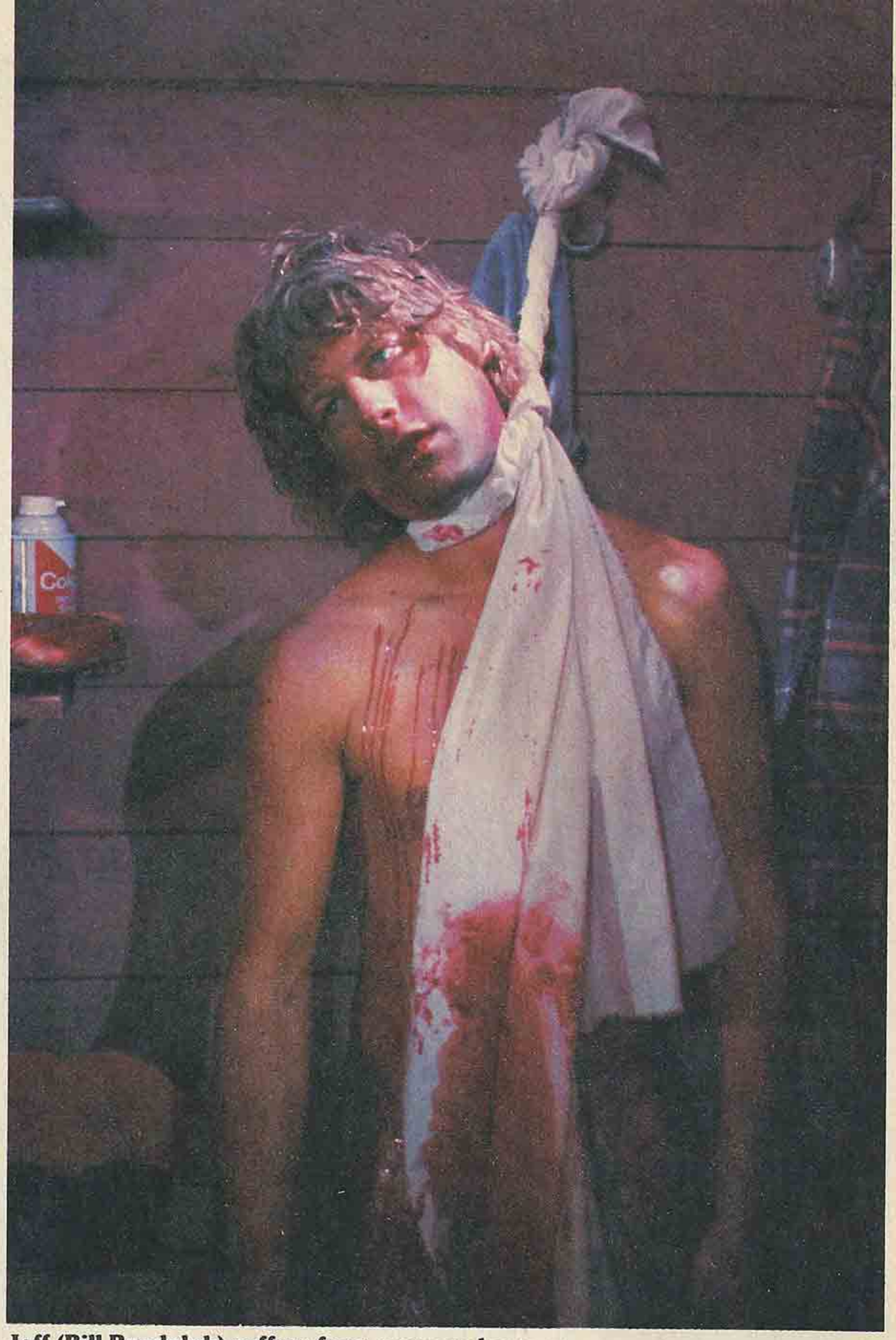
Confronting the question of whether or not Jason survived was one of Miner's lesser worries. He also had to overcome some of the original picture's more principal problems.

"Saying there were mistakes in the first-film's script was not the way I approached it," says the director-producer. "I came to the project thinking that there were some very *good* things about the first script, mainly the structure. I felt that the overall framework—the way the story was told—worked. We tried, however to improve upon some of the character and dialogue flaws. We attempted to make the characters a little more realistic. We *did* avoid 'strip monopoly . . .'"

Miner and screenwriter Ron Kurz (who had done some rewrites on *Part I*'s script), did indeed give their movie fuller characters. Yet their reminiscent structure—including a throat slashing and an after-sex murder—might disturb some theater patrons who pay to see a *new* production. These scenes' saving grace is that, for the most part, they are put against different settings and emotional moods from what was utilized in Cunningham's feature. Other holdovers from *Part I* are Harry Manfredini's "Hiss, hiss, hissing" Jason soundtrack theme, a swimming hole sequence, and Walt Gorney as the camptown's resident weirdo, Crazy Ralph.

"Walt is really a very dedicated actor," Miner smiles. "I think that he tends to live his roles. We'd be between takes, sitting around the location, and Walt would be talking to himself. I don't know if he does that in real life, but he did it on the set. Crazy Ralph is *so* strange, that maybe Walt had to act weird *all of the time* in order to stay in character."

While retaining Walt Gorney and Adrienne King was fairly easy, getting *Friday the 13th*'s production personnel to return was nearly impossibly. Most followups have sometimes as much as two



Jeff (Bill Randolph) suffers from a severe hang-up.

Gee . . . Jason coulda had a V-8!

years after their predecessor's release before they start shooting, but since *Friday the 13th Part II* was slated to begin so quickly, most of the original's crew were committed to other projects. Perhaps Miner's largest loss was the absence of Tom Savini.

"Tom's a good friend and a very talented man," says Miner. "Unfortunately, he was involved with another film in Buffalo (*The Burning*). When his schedule kept running over and it became apparent that he wouldn't be able to do the sequel, I called a good friend of mine in Los Angeles, Stan Winston [*Gargoyles*' "background" creatures, *Dead and Buried*].

"When I called Stan about *Friday the 13th Part II*, he said that he wanted to do it, but that he also had a bunch of conflicts. One of the problems was that I had to shoot here in the East Coast and Stan was busy with his studio in California. [Winston wound up casting Betsy Palmer's negative mold for Mrs. Vorhees' severed head.] Stan told me to call Dick Smith, who then highly recommended Carl Fullerton. [Fullerton had worked in various capacities on such endeavors as *Saturday Night Live*, *The Wiz*, the upcoming *Wolfen*, and as Smith's assistant on *Altered States*.] Stan also thought extremely well of Carl. It *was* a disappointment not to use Tom Savini again, because he has such tremendous creative energy and is a joy to work with. Now, he even has certain box office appeal. But when Carl Fullerton brought a severed head that he had made for *Wolfen*—it was so amazingly lifelike and extraordinary—to our first production meeting, I knew that he'd be up to the job. I confidently feel that after *Wolfen* and *Friday the 13th Part II*, the name Carl Fullerton will have box office appeal as well. He's incredibly skilled and creative."

No matter how important script, cast and crew may be the real star of any graphic horror film is its special effects. Fortunately, Miner's gamble on the relatively unknown Carl Fullerton paid off. Fullerton's work in the sequel is certainly as disturbing as anything created by Savini for *Part I*.

"The most elaborate makeup effect is the 'after-sex' impaling through two bodies at the same time," comments Miner. "We used special rigs and some excellent large body appliances that Carl Fullerton made which necessitated the actors being put in *very* uncomfortable positions. Carl and his assistant, Dick Smith's son, David, have a kind of air pressure tank that shoots blood out. They made the scene really gruesome. The blood is made up of jelly and stuff . . . It's horrible!

"My *favorite* murder is when Mark (Tom McBride) gets the machete in his head. Part of the thrill in these movies is that the audience knows that the guy or gal is going to get it, but the tension builds up as they're trying to guess *when* and from *where* the murder's going to come. What I like to do is distract the audience as much as possible. The buildup to the machete killing is nice because it really throws the audience off. I think it's cleverly conceived and executed. To do the murder, I had a special mask built to cover Tom McBride's face and catch the machete. With a quick reverse cut, though, it seems like the murder actually happens on screen. The mask was very simply built from a catcher's mask that we put styrofoam on. We made the machete out of balsa wood."

Do *not* tell this man that he looks like John Hurt.

A nice cold beer—just the thing for those splitting headaches.

Unlike many first-time directors faced with helming a horror opus, the prospect of dealing with intense gore effects didn't bother Miner.

"I really found it interesting," Miner admits. "On the last film, Tom Savini took over the editing studio in my house in Connecticut to build all of his stuff. I was with him all of the time, so I got a pretty good working knowledge of how all the various tricks work. With my background as an editor, I was able to easily visualize the effects sequences. In fact, I storyboarded the whole film. I very carefully worked out how the effects scenes would work, how one shot would cover another. That enabled me to tell Carl to build only

(continued on page 64)

exactly what we needed. The storyboarding was very enjoyable, because it was like putting all the pieces together of a giant puzzle."

Working with Carl Fullerton may have been fun for Steve, but the detailed makeup effects must have caused some of the actors to have doubts about their decision to let themselves be murdered on celluloid.

"They were all good sports about it," notes Miner. "The makeup—particularly Jason's—was terribly uncomfortable. Jason's makeup covered all of the actor's [Warrington Gillette] face. Warrington was in makeup for *six hours* to get the appliances on. Once Warrington had it on, he couldn't eat. Warrington had to do that *twice*, because the first time they filmed the sequence where you get to see what Jason looks like, it didn't work. That was one of the scenes that I didn't figure out properly. There was *a lot* to coordinate. In the first *Friday the 13th*, it took us *three* takes to get the scene where Jason comes up out of the water correctly shot."

Miner's mention of Jason's makeup prompted FANGORIA to remember the controversy that surrounded our coverage of the last film (see FANGORIA #6). On *Part I*, Tom Savini was instructed to make Jason look like a mongoloid. FANGORIA received complaints when we ran a photo feature entitled "How To Make a Mongoloid" (see "The Postal Zone," issue #8). Although Miner claims that Georgetown Productions didn't receive any admonitory letters, Jason doesn't appear as a mongoloid in the sequel.

"*We* never said 'mongoloid,'" Miner insists. "Someone else on the staff did, but I'm not going to pass the buck. That word *was* used, but not to belittle or make fun of handicapped people. 'Mongoloid' was used to describe someone who might be horribly deformed and at the same time be mentally uncapable of taking care of himself. Tom might have just latched onto the word 'mongoloid' and made him look that way."

Along with a "new look" for Jason, Miner also brought to the sequel a new female lead, after spoiling Adrienne King's "girl-next-door" good looks in the pre-credit sequence. Amy Steel fills the lead role of Ginny, the youth who ultimately faces Jason in the final confrontation. Like King's Alice, Ginny is an independent type, but Steel injects her heroine with another quality: sex appeal. Casting Steel in the lead role was a cagey move for Miner, who is aware that fright film fans are fond of starring actresses cut from a traditional, unabashedly sensual mold.

"I think that Hitchcock figured that one out, with Tippi Hedren and the rest," says Miner. "We were really fortunate to get Amy for the part. Our casting agents, Simon and Kumin, did a terrific job scouring New York for the best people, and it shows in the movie. The basics still hold true—you have to care about the characters."

Another coup for Miner was his success in signing Betsy Palmer for a return appearance in the sequel, despite the letter-writing campaign stirred up by Chicago critic Gene Siskel, who encouraged his readers to write to Betsy Palmer at her home town to express their shock at her participating in such a film. The scene that features her cameo appearance is one of the best of the entire movie.

Undoubtedly, Miner's film will have to face some of the critical barbs that were thrown at the Cunningham film. Miner isn't too bothered by the prospect, however.

"Critics don't understand this kind of movie," he says. "You have to show some realistic violence in order to make the set-up frightening. You can't scare people nowadays without showing some kind of gore. I have my doubts whether the audience that enjoys 'pure' psychological terror exists anymore.

"You don't necessarily have to dwell on violence, however, to satisfy an audience. Still, I'm sure there will be people, especially critics who will think that we've gone overboard. All I have to say to them is, 'Don't go to see *Friday the 13th, Part II*.' If you don't enjoy this type of picture, fine—but other people do. I can't worry about

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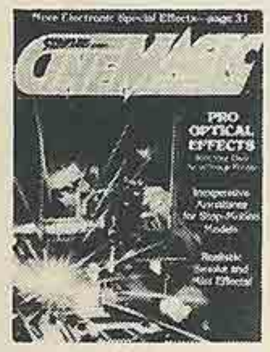

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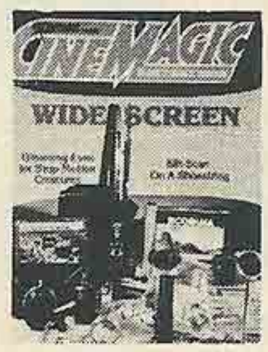

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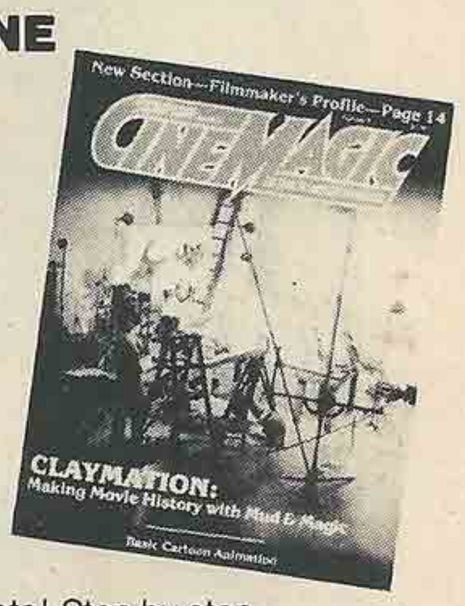

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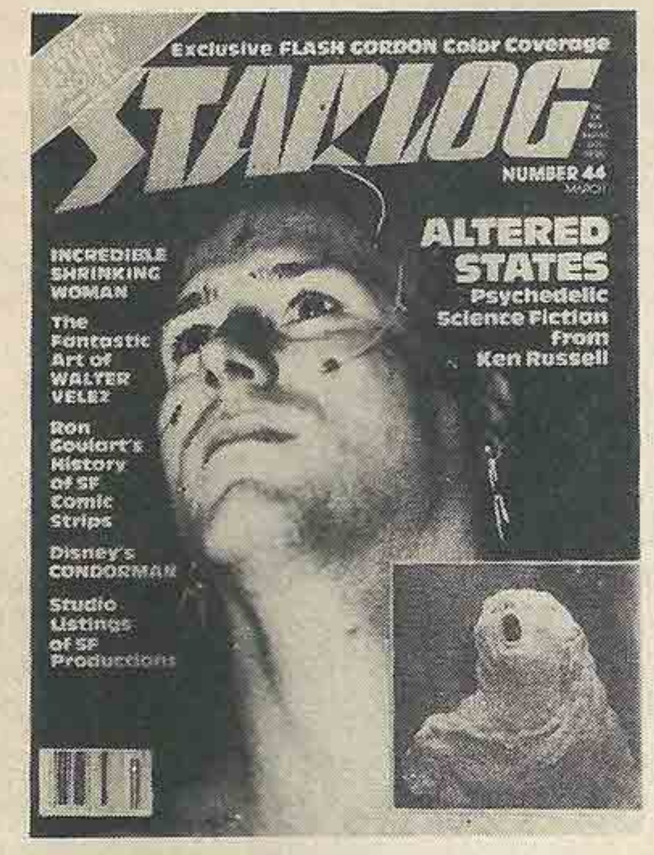

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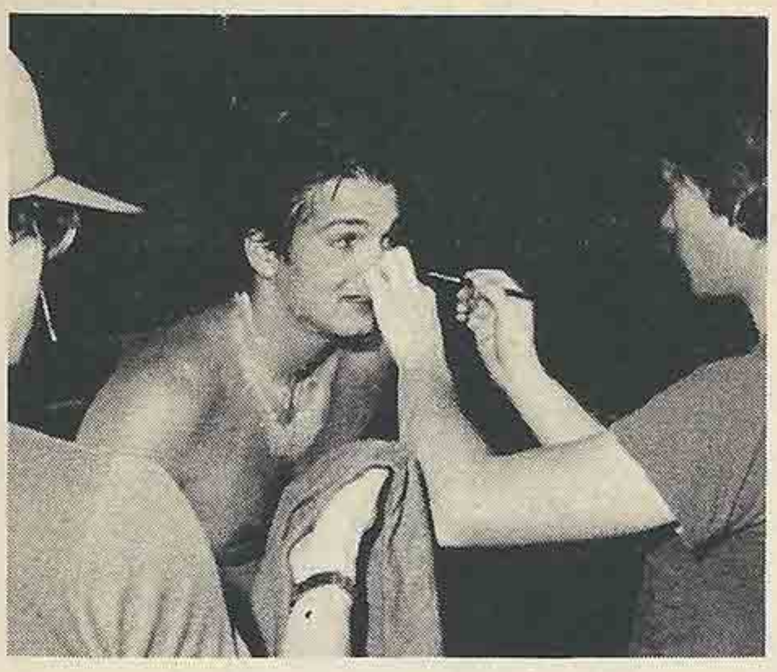


Several views of Carl Fullerton at work, creating a face that only Mrs. Vorhees could love.

what the critics will say. If we made a movie to please the critics, we probably wouldn't be doing justice to our audience."

While Miner may be able to brush off the expected jibes of the critical press, there is one set of critics that cannot be ignored—the ratings board of the Motion Picture Association of America. Since last year, the MPAA has responded to the demands of alarmists like Chicago's Siskel, and have taken a tougher stance on film violence—as anyone knows who has seen the difference between this magazine's coverage of *Bloody Valentine* and the severely cut version that was released to theaters. If the ratings board stamps Miner's current cut of the picture with an X rating, Miner and the picture will have to return to the editing room.

"I *am* worried that we'll have to edit a lot from the film," Miner admits. "I was involved with the trimming that we had to do on the first one, though, and our cutting didn't diminish the movie's effectiveness. We basically just had to tone down some of the excessive blood. If that's all we have to do on this one, it won't be too bad. The success of *Friday the 13th Part II* isn't based on *total* explicitness."

One solution to the possible MPAA problem is to release *Friday the 13th Part II* without a rating. But while small distributors can afford to release their films without the MPAA's approval, Paramount Pictures cannot, since it would cause them political problems with their other, larger-budgeted productions. Isn't this a state that might make Steve wish that his movie was being released by a company like United Films Distribution (the firm that releases George Romero's pictures)?

"A major is *always* much more effective in releasing a movie," answers Miner. "They have the money for advertising and the ability to line up an incredible number of theatres. But I guess it's too early to say. My answer would really have to be based on how much we have to cut in order to get the 'R' rating. It would obviously be a shame if whatever trimming we have to do ends up hurting *Friday the 13th Part II*. It would be sad not to release a film in its most effective form. But Paramount has brilliant marketing and they're the best people to distribute this picture. We'll have to wait and see."

One condition that might damage *Friday the 13th Part II* is *already* in the film. Throughout most of the picture, Jason wears an *Elephant Man*-type mask. Albeit Jason is supposed to terrify theatre crowds, his hood might make them giggle.

"That was an unfortunate coincidence," Steve concedes, "but we finished shooting right before *The Elephant Man* came out. The mask wasn't meant as a joke, so I hope people won't laugh at Jason. I don't think it will remind people of *The Elephant Man*, however, because the two films are so completely different."

Since *Friday the 13th* was such a great success, if its sequel fails financially, the blame will be entirely levelled at Steve Miner. Since this is Miner's directorial debut, that could possibly stop his promising career.

"This is my break," comments Miner. "Wes Craven, Sean Cunningham and I all started out together on *Last House on the Left*, but this is *my* first major shot. I'll be judged on this film. I really wanted to do better than *Part I*, and I think I have. So far, I've been very fortunate in my professional life. But even if *Friday the 13th Part II* is a terrible bomb, which I know it won't be, it won't stop my career. I still have a lot of years ahead of me."

"There's a curse on this picture," Crazy Ralph (Walt Gorney) tells Steve Miner.

Cosmic

Continued from Page 38

since the creature was very active, Craig and Mike had to keep tabs on the status of his body hair throughout the day. We couldn't have it falling off during a strenuous scene. That was a really hard assignment. It took almost a day of one man's work to just prepare the hair and lay up the various mats for one, single makeup session. And we shot like that for many, many days."

Meanwhile, back in New York, Jessup's rubbery sense of metaphysics progressed . . . slowly. "Things were getting a bit confusing at this time," Smith understates. "After we designed the third, open mouthed suit for the tank scene, it was decided that, in order to have a camera zooming down the mouth, we needed a much bigger mouth. I was asked to construct a very large head that would have a mouth as big as a honeydew melon. The fact would be somewhat more abstract that the one on the third suit so, in essence, this was the fourth stage of this transformation. The mouth would have a long gullet and the camera would go through it. Then, they'd work in the special effects."

At one point, Russell wanted to zoom in on the face in a whirlpool effect and, so, a twenty foot whirlpool made out of transparent mylar was built. The camera was rigged to slide down the rotating plastic funnel and zip into the mouth of Smith's oversized creation. The experiment produced mixed results, according to Smith. Before they shot it, they killed the idea of the camera going down the mouth. So, this whole exceedingly complicated whirlpool effect could have been shot with a lifesized head and effects on a much smaller scale.

"Meanwhile," he laughs, "back at the rubber suits, we're still working our butts off. We bring out these large moving boxes filled with the three or four modles of each suit and makeup out to Hollywood. One of the first things we did on the coast was try out the first suit in water. I had actually put Bill Hurt into my bathtub because I wanted to make sure he wouldn't bob up and down like a cork. I was also concerned about the problems of drying out a foam rubber suit after a single day's shooting. I was able to get it dried out in a sort of laundry extractor. That got the water out of it. I dried it out the rest of the way myself and retouched the paint on it. It didn't shrink too much but it was a hell of a problem.

"At this point, Ken decides that the figure that emerges from the water shouldn't be murky at all but glowing radiantly. Now, a rubber suit just can't radiate and glow. So, Ken decides to build the entire lab set with a plexiglass bottom lit from below so that we'll get a good glow. At considerable expense, they got one inch plexiglass and built an elevated set that was really a tank. The supports were made of plexiglass, so there'd be no shadows from the lighting below. In the center of this set was a well that was deeper than the floor so that Bill could effectively emerge from beneath the water.

"So, we put Bill into one of our suits and put him into the well. The suit became so saturated with water that when Bill emerged, it began to tear. And Bill, being a very enthusiastic performer, began gesticulating wildly and the whole thing began to tear. It was, generally speaking, a disaster. Craig and I were terrified. We dried out the suit and realized that all the suits had to be reinforced. We glued elastic webbing inside. It cut down on the flexibility but it strengthened the suits.

"OK. One problem down. Next, we find that the light coming from below changed the color of the suits on camera. They no longer looked flesh color. They looked green. We had to repaint the suits to adapt to all these new conditions.

"Then, we ran into another problem. Nobody had really thought about how poor Bill was going to perform this scene emerging from a slippery plexiglass tank in a rubber suit. He had nothing to hold onto. They had a few concentric steps down in the well but they weren't too effective. I had a set of wooden stairs built and worked out a whole method by which Bill could choreograph his moves without killing himself.

"Now, we have Bill emerging from the tank with the light shining from below. Well, the suit didn't glow at all, the floor did."

After experimenting disastrously with glowing mechanical Jessups, director Russell's solution was to paint the suits white. The white coating, however, effectively obliterated much of the suits' detail.

"We had spent so much time worrying about the tank scene," Smith smiles, "that no one thought about Bill in the final transformation scene. Most of our attention had been directed towards Blair Brown. We threw out a lot of ideas. At one point, we were going to have an exploding belly on her. Her transformation was going to be truly grotesque as opposed to what was finally done.

"Eventually, we came up with two suits for her. One was based on an idea Ken got from looking at *Gray's Anatomy*. It was a clear suit showing all her muscles and veins. Her skin was gone, replaced by a clear, jelly like substance. Ken didn't like that because he felt the suit made her look too fat. We also used our cracked suit, a suit showing cracks in her skin with a glowing molten substance beneath.

"For Bill, we wound up using the original tank room suit with the shriveling arm and a big, grotesque one. It was a last-minute decision. I think we came up with it the day before we shot the scene. I didn't mind since nothing was making any sense in that scene anyhow."

Smith sighs audibly. "And all this started with the construction of a couple of moles . . ."

Just whatever happened to those moles, anyhow? "Oh, we came up with a couple of great ones, he says. "We constructed bladders out of the urethane rubber. They were extremely elastic. We developed a whole new technology for making very thin bladders that could conform to whatever surface they had to be used on. Having this new technology, I could make this mole effect, this skin bubbling across the body, by having a series of overlapping bladders inflate sequentially in an undulating progression. That made it possible to do it actually using the actor. What this means is that we had to make a foam latex

The "cracked" suit as it appears in the film, with Ferren's opticals added.

skin that would cover actor Bill Hurt's forearm, let's say, that would only have one seam in it. That's fairly complicated. We solved all the problems, though. The only thing I'm unhappy about is that, in the film, the effects aren't used as well as they could have been as far as photographing them is concerned. Especially in one scene where Bill's brow begins to expand. A terrific effect that I feel was badly handled. Ken also wanted maximum inflation for the bladders which I think lessens the reality of the effect on the screen.

After over a year on *Altered States*, Smith called it quits and returned to his home in New York while Russell and his optical crew gave the film its final sheen. Being somewhat of a workaholic, Smith then immediately acted as a consultant for the forthcoming ESP-wars film, *Scanners*. Eventually, at the behest of director David Cronenberg, Smith appeared on the set for the climatic last scene.

"I developed a whole new bladder effect for *Scanners*," Smith says proudly. "The scene involves inflation but not with air but blood. I had to design bladders that would appear to be strange blood blisters. We used plastic appliances, not rubber. The bladders in *Altered States* were covered with foam latex skin and when they bloated they seemed to be bubbles on the skin itself. Here, the bladders were hollow and made out of clear plastic. They were inflated with blood so that you could see the blood rushing into the skin. The appliances would then bleed. The blood seems to rise to the surface of the skin and, then, ooze out. That was quite complicated."

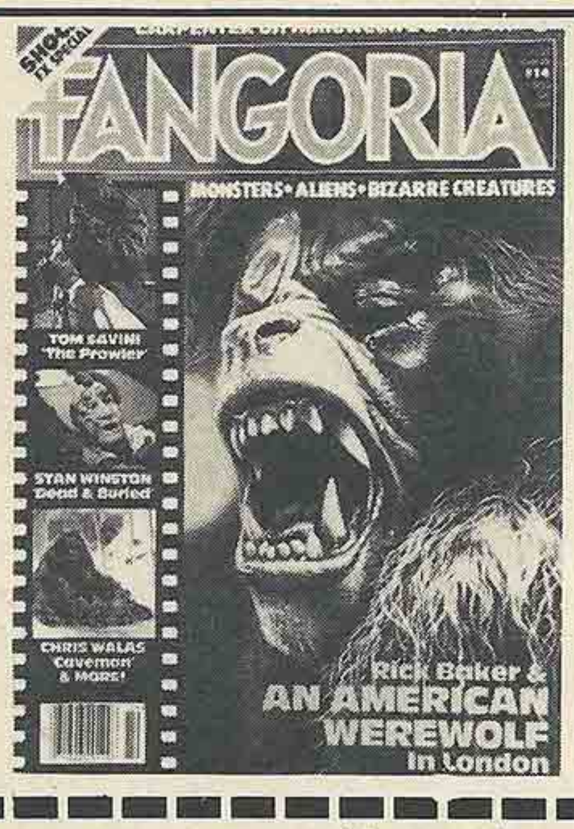
Smith brings the interview to a close, talking of plans to fly to Hollywood in a week for a short business trip. Genuinely fascinated with his craft, he allows his *Altered States* verbal horror story to end with, what amounts to, a spoken wink.

"The interesting thing about all this mole stuff is, that since I pass along all my findings to my friends, Rick Baker has incorporated some of my technologies into his werewolf picture [*An American Werewolf in London*, produced by John Landis], for the transformation scene. He, in turn, passed the word to Rob Bottin for *his* werewolf picture [Avco Embassy's *The Howling*]. The irony of all this is that their pictures might be seen by audiences before mine! I want to lay claim to this process right here and now."

Smith concludes the latest episode in his three and a half decade career with a chuckle. "That's all right. I'll steal from them the next time . . . just kidding."

Editor's Note: When Ed Naha spoke with Dick Smith, the makeup artist had not seen a final version of the movie. When he did, Smith called Naha to give him the following statement which we are printing to put a fitting cap on the interview.

"I now have a better perception of the frustrating conceptual changes that have occurred on this film. When the production started, I presumed that the tremendous bodily transformations of the actors would be done with optical effects. During the early meetings with Arthur Penn, I argued against the use of rubber prosthetic suits. Even when the suits were decided upon, I pleaded for optical enhancement of them. Ironically, I became more enthusiastic about what we were achieving with the rubber suits as work progressed. So, when much later on, Ken Russell changed or eliminated much of my work, I was bitterly disappointed. Now, I realized that when Ken was thrown into the production, he inherited a load of preconceptions which he accepted as practical but against his natural creative instincts. As he worked his way through the film, he kept shucking off the physical transformation approach, making it more optical. It was, in fact, the approach I originally thought to be the right one. I had become too attached to my own work however, to see what was happening. Now I believe that if Ken had started the production instead of Arthur our work together would have developed with greater agreement and sympathy and less wasted effort. I now have seen the film and find it original, exciting and brilliant. I am proud to be a part of it."



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#12-ROMERO's *KNIGHTRIDERS;* Tobe HOOPER interview; GORDON on KARLOFF; *FRIDAY THE 13th II;* CORMAN Interview; *CLASH OF TITANS; INSEMINOID;* Ron GOULART; William CASTLE; Elisabeth BROOKS; HAMMER on TV; Mother of Mercy, More!

#13-The ROMERO Interview; Hal Barwood and *DRAGONSLAYER;* On the Set—*THE BEAST WITHIN;* CORMAN on PLANET OF HORRORS: Michael WADLEIGH's *THE WOLFEN;* John Landis on *AN AMERICAN WEREWOLF;* Fantasy Femme P.J. SOLES; Crom! More!

#14-RICK BAKER and *AN AMERICAN WEREWOLF IN LONDON,* SHOCK FX SPECIAL interviews with Savini, Tom Burman, Stan Winston, Chris Walas and Ray Harryhausen; Jenny Agutter on her career; Carpenter on *Halloween II* Horror comics; AND YES, More!

#15-HALLOWEEN II interviews with Debra Hill, Rick Rosenthal and Jamie Lee Curtis; Burman Part II, Harryhausen Part II; Richard O'Brien on SHOCK TREATMENT; at last, Hitchcock Part II; the TV Years; and on the set of SWAMP THING; believe it or not MORE!

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Fiona Lewis

Our Femme Fatale—a sultry Englishwoman whose Strange Behaviour has stirred up quite a Fury!

By James Verniere

Fiona Lewis is arguably the most talented and beautiful unexploited resource in film today. It may have something to do with her wicked tongue, coupled with an intelligence that, among starlets who have made their names in low-budget horror, is startling. This woman is not the type to make points with directors who need four assistants just to stroke their egos. This is the woman who walked up to Brian DePalma after the first screening of *The Fury* and said, "Brian, I'm very disappointed!"

Ironically, many of the most rabid horror/sf fans do not know Fiona Lewis by name. Oh, but they recognize that face. It's almost a caricature of feline sensuality. In her latest film, Michael Laughlin's *Strange Behavior,* she looks like a combination between Gale Sondergaard in *The Spider Woman* and the *Ice Queen,* and it's the otherworldliness of her looks that makes her so unforgettable (those lucky enough to catch the layout she did in *Oui* a few years back know that the rest of her is as heavenly).

Yet, despite her anonymity, Fiona Lewis has worked in some of the genre's most stylish films with some of the genre's most respected directors: In 1967, she had a small part in Roman Polanski's *The Fearless Vampire Killers.* She co-starred with Vincent Price in Robert Fuest's *Dr. Phibes Rises Again* (1972). In 1973, she starred in a classy CBS production of *Dracula,* directed by Dan Curtis, starring Jack Palance, and written by Richard Matheson. She was Roger Daltry's mistress in Ken Russell's phantasmagorical *Lisztomania* (1975), a Freudian/Nazi nightmare vision of the life of Franz Liszt. In Brian DePalma's *The Fury* she was a government agent whose job was to keep a teenage psychic sexually occupied. Who can forget the scene in which she is levitated and bled to death when the young psychic (Andrew Stevens) goes berserk? And in Michael Laughlin's *Strange Behavior* she plays Gwen Parkinson, a government researcher with a decidedly kinky bent.

Yet, for all of her talent and experi-

PHOTO: © 1975 WARNER BROS.

Our heroine offers a peevish pout as Countess Marie in *Lisztomania*.

"This will only cause *extreme pain* for just a few *short months*," says Dr. Fiona in *Strange Behavior*.

PHOTO: © 1978 20TH CENTURY-FOX

"Frankly, Fiona, if Brian doesn't make me a star, I can always direct," says John Cassavetes in another phony FANGORIA quote.

ence, Fiona Lewis is disillusioned with film and filmmakers, so disillusioned that she has been semi-retired for the last several years, working as a free-lance journalist and screenwriter.

When upon meeting Miss Lewis I reminded her that I had recently interviewed an old friend of hers named Jacqueline Bisset for another publication, she lit up.

"Oh, my old roommate. Is she in New York? Did you know we once shared a flat in London? Can you imagine waking up day after day and finding this gorgeous creature in the room? It was a tiny place, two beds and a gas burner. Horror at 12 pounds a week. Well, Jackie's done quite well for herself, hasn't she?" she asked with a wicked smile.

Lewis met Bisset while working for an airline called Eagle Airways, selling tickets on the graveyard shift ("it was terrible"). She gave up to join Bisset, who was working at the time as a model. Somehow, the two met Roman Polanski. Bisset got a part in *Cul-De-Sac* (1967), and Lewis in *The Fearless Vampire Killers or: Pardon Me, But Your Teeth Are in My Neck* (1967). Since that time Lewis went on to make several films, many she no longer chooses to remember.

At any rate, Fiona Lewis came out of her semi-retirement and abandoned her desk on a lark to star with Michael Murphy and Louise Fletcher in *Strange Behavior*, which is an old-fashioned mad scientist film about a Dr. Mabuse-like figure named Dr. LeSange, a behavioral psychologist who turns a town full of teens into killer devoids. It's a kind of *Hardy Boys Go To Hell*. Lewis's Gwen Parkinson is a sexually repressed assistant to LeSange. In her lab coat and her spiked heels, she is a cold-blooded killer with a current of molten lava just beneath her porcelain exterior, and for her performance, she has received the kinds of reviews actors dream about.

"You have no idea what this film has done for my ego," she said laughingly as she sat before me in a conservative grey pin-stripe suit that somehow looked terribly sexy on her. "I'm quite stunned," she added. "I never thought I'd get reviews like this." Then without missing a beat, she added, "Too little, too late."

Surely not, I protested.

"Well really, I'm 35. What am I going to do? Start all over again?" she asked. "Well, make that 31.

"I'm a journalist now, free-lance. I do magazine pieces if I can get them. I used to write a lot for the *L.A. Times*. But now I write screenplays."

Lewis' decision to switch to journalism had to do with her dissatisfaction with her career as an actress. In 18 years of work, she estimated that she had worked steadily for perhaps two years. "In between times," she said, "it's incredibly boring. Years ago I decided I should try to be something else, and I rather arrogantly decided that I could be a journalist."

Fiona Lewis has always wanted to be a writer, even in the days when, as a girl, she found herself ensconced in an all-girls convent school in her native England. There she dreamed of becoming a famous writer, despite the fact that she was not very interested in her studies.

"Even then I knew how hard writing must be. It's really much harder than acting (perhaps I shouldn't say that), and the pay is shitty. But now that I'm writing screenplays there's more money in it."

She just finished a screenplay, a romantic comedy called *American Rhapsody*, which has been optioned. Apparently, she is serious about finding a career outside of acting despite

even her recent good notices in *Strange Behavior.*

"I have a fear of acting because it has been my experience that you often do not get offered the parts that you can be good in. You just take what you can get, and, in addition, I never became a star, which frankly pisses me off. There's only so long you can work at this game. You are either someone who just loves to act, or you are someone who wants to be a star. I'm the latter, and I haven't made it. I don't understand it and I think it's grossly unfair, mind you," she said flashing a grin like a Cheshire cat.

Lest you misjudge her, be assured that her statements were delivered in a thoroughly ironic tone. Lewis has a biting sense of humour and a sharp, self-deprecating wit that may be charming to most of us, but could conceivably be disturbing to film industry types, who appear to prefer more submissive actors.

Why did Lewis choose to work in pictures in the first place? "How I got into pictures?" she repeated, mocking my question a bit. "Well, I happened to meet Roman Polanski while I was working as a French interpreter, and he recommended me to a French producer who was looking for an English girl who could speak French to cast in a low-budget French film. So I thought, 'Why not be an actress?'

"Then I got a part in an Italian picture the title of which I cannot, or choose not, to remember."

Following that baptism of sorts and her part in *Fearless Vampire Killers,* Lewis landed a role in Dick Clement's *Otley* (1969) with Tom Courtenay and Romy Schneider. She got third billing

Nobody pouts like Fiona! In *Dr. Phibes Rises Again,* she plays the demure young wife of Robert *(Count Yorga)* Quarry, sworn enemy of Phibes. Below, Quarry struggles in a vain attempt to save Fiona from chicken-wire death!!!

PHOTOS: © 1972 AIP

PHOTO: © 1978 20TH CENTURY-FOX

PHOTO: © 1975 WARNER BROS.

As a manipulator of men in *The Fury;* as a seductive aristocrat in *Lisztomania*—*why isn't this woman a star?!?!!*

in James Clavell's *Where's Jack?* ("I didn't work for a year after that one," she said by way of criticism.) Robert Fuest's *Dr. Phibes Rises Again* followed.

"I remember working with Vincent Price who said he was only doing it because he loved the costumes, so I thought, 'This is right up my alley.' "

In the period between *Phibes* and *The Fury,* Lewis starred opposite Roger Daltry in Ken Russell's outrageous *Lisztomania,* a film she avoided discussing, despite the fact that Russell's fantasy stands a good chance of withstanding the test of time and is frequently revived in repertory theaters.

"I remember a press conference I was on for that film in New York with 50 journalists. They were all hysterical, screaming at me things like, 'How could you make this picture?' I said, 'It was just a job.' "

Actually, in a more serious vein, she explained that she believed Russell would make a marvelous horror film director because, as she put it, "he has such a bizarre mind."

Her recollection of *The Fury* is no fonder. "Brian told us he was going to make us all stars. As you know, that didn't quite work out. Plus I had to go through having a dummy of me made. Now Rick Baker is a marvelous man, but it was such a grueling experience because they had to make those casts. They immerse you section by section in plaster of Paris. It's awful, just awful," she said recalling the experience of making a replica of herself, which greets visitors to Rick Baker's studio because it now hangs from his ceiling.

"I remember sitting on the set of *The Fury* one day," she continued, "covered in pig's blood or something from head to foot. It was the lunch hour. I'd been in this blood for a week now, and there's John Cassavetes sitting next to me, also covered with this crap, and he says, "Aren't you glad you didn't go to acting school, Fiona?' "

She went on to describe the experience of being suspended for days in a harness for some of the film's levitation scenes. "They really only make those harnesses for boys, you know," she said hinting at the nature of her discomfort.

When I explained to her that our interview was destined to become a part of FANGORIA"s *Femme Fatale* series, she was ecstatic. "Oh, that's marvelous," she said. "I've always wanted to be a *femme fatale.* Instead, I've always been a jerk."

Although she was not a genre film fan as a child growing up in suburban England, Lewis could recall being so frightened by Jack Clayton's *The Innocents* (1961) as a girl that she couldn't climb her home stairs in the dark after seeing the film.

"I love horror films," she said. "But I don't like gory films. I don't mind doing films in which there is gore," she said in deference to *Strange Behavior*'s excesses in that department. "I would love to specialize in horror or fantasy films. I have no burning desire to play *Hamlet* or some such thing. I would simply like to work."

Originally from Essex, a rural area east of London, Fiona Lewis is an upper middle-class girl by birth. Her father is a judge. She was a rebellious adolescent. She fled from a convent school ("The nuns all had mustaches.") when she was 15 and spent a year skiing.

"The nuns didn't like me because I was frank," she said. "And I used to question the basis of religion. I was the one who'd raise her hand and ask, 'How can you prove . . .?' "

Fiona became involved with *Strange Behavior* (formerly titled *Dead Kids)* because she is a friend of Michael Laughlin's and because the script was funny. "I liked the story. People had funny lines and it starred Michael Murphy and Louise Fletcher. I'll always accept work with a director I think is smart who has a good idea."

Until that happens again, Fiona Lewis has returned to her typewriter. Can it be long before some enterprising young director sends her a good script? After reading her reviews for *Strange Behavior,* I would say that she doesn't have long to wait.

PHOTOS: © 1978 20TH CENTURY-FOX

Andrew Stevens (Stella's son) takes telekinetic vengeance on our heroine in dePalma's garbled epic, *The Fury*.

Scanners

(Continued from page 41)

decided that the money set aside for that purpose would be better used in re-shooting the end, since a lot of people wouldn't be seeing it with Dolby sound anyway [many theaters don't have the necessary sound system], but everybody will see the ending. So we put the money there instead, and did a very careful, detailed re-shoot of the very last two scenes.

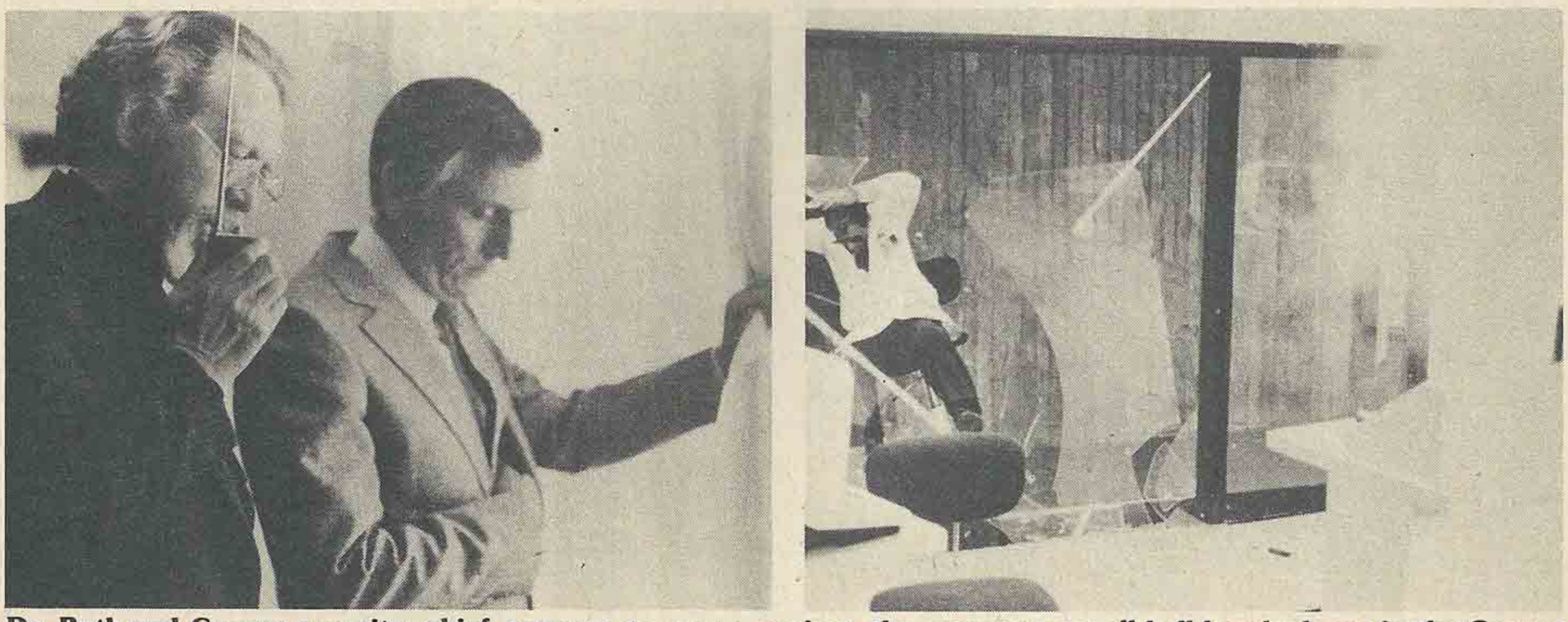
"Dick was well-recovered by that time, so we were fortunate to have him come on the set at that time. Earlier I'd been quite disappointed that he couldn't actually come up and work with us, so I was really thrilled, and it couldn't have worked out better.

"Dick's a delightful person, very kind and very generous. He's a master—no question—and it was a total delight to work with him."

Cronenberg vs. The Censor

While Smith has certainly devised some startling effects for the film's conclusion, it's the film's very opening scene that seems most likely to cause trouble when

Cronenberg and crew bundled up for a cold shoot in the Montreal winter. While crew kept warm, actors had to *act* warm.



Dr. Ruth and Consec security chief prepare to move against the scanners, as all hell breaks loose in the Consec computer room.

the completed film is screened before the Motion Picture Association of America for a rating. During a brief conversation with Claude Heroux, the film's producer suggested that the exploding head sequence may not be included in the final print. Cronenberg admits to that possibility.

"If we were to get an 'X' from the MPAA, and it becomes obvious that it's the head that would be the cause of it, then we'd certainly have to think about it, because the alternative of releasing it with an 'X' really would be a shame." In case such a ratings emergency does arise, Cronenberg already has an alternate take completed, filmed for use in possible future TV broadcasts of *Scanners*, in which the Consec scanner dies of a heart attack.

Cameron unVales the secret of the scanners.

The heart attack substitution is not a move Cronenberg will gladly or even willingly make. He feels that graphic shock at the film's beginning is important in establishing the extent of the scanners' awesome power. But . . . "'X' really puts you in the porno category," says Cronenberg. "What you really need is another rating category."

And while Cronenberg is undoubtedly Canada's most successful home-grown filmmaker, he has met with similar censorship problems at home. In Canada, each province has its own system of governing film standards—and the toughest is the province where Cronenberg lives and works, Ontario. Cronenberg explains; "what happens is that the Ontario board cuts each print, every print that will be shown in the province. They cut them themselves, and keep the pieces. If you want to put those prints back together again, you can, but you have to go to them, give them back the censor band that they place around each approved reel, and splice each piece back in. That's a lot of trouble to go to, it's a lot easier for a distributor to say lét's cut them all the same way, and not have to worry about it. Or you can just lose track—it's very hard to guarantee that one of those Ontario prints won't be shown in Manitoba. I had to fight to make sure that *The Brood* didn't get shown in the other provinces cut."

After *Scanners* runs past the censors (safely, we hope), and after Cronenberg survives the major publicity hooplah Avco Embassy Pictures plans for the film's opening, Cronenberg has another two projects already lined up. One of these is a real dream project, which we won't reveal just yet—it would be just too sad if that dream doesn't come true. The other is just as exciting, and the title says it all: *David Cronenberg's Frankenstein.*

Cronenstein

All the details on *Frankenstein* are still up in the air—when we spoke to him Cronenberg hadn't started on the script yet, because he was still working on *Scanners*' final edit and sound mix—but he agreed to talk a bit about his hopes and intentions.

"I don't intend to remain literally faithful to the book," he says. "It doesn't interest me to do a small period piece, which is what it would be. There's a movie called *Victor Frankenstein*, with Per Oscarsson as the monster—I believe it was a Swedish-Irish coproduction. It was incredibly faithful to the book, and as a result it was a lonely, bleak art film that mainly dealt with one or two people in a room. It was a very interesting little film, and did some things that I've never seen in any other Frankenstein; for instance, the monster was made in a rented flat, an apartment, just as in Mary Shelley's book—no castle, no nothin'. The monster is very articulate, and talks people into things, including Dr. Frankenstein, as in the book. So that's another reason for not being totally faithful to the book, because that film was.

"In terms of theme, I would like to get at some things in some ways that haven't been done before. In terms of plot and detailing, it will have to be completely different, and right now I have no idea how.

"Thematically, the idea of a parent creating a child, and then rejecting the child and having the child reject the creator, that *is* the story. In Mary Shelley's terms, it was also the story of man and God—her opening quote from *Paradise Lost** sets that up.

"I'd never thought of it before, but once the idea was suggested to me, by (executive producer) Pierre David, it suddenly became obvious that, in a sense, it was the idea that I'd been working with from the beginning."

And it does seem that *Frankenstein* is the perfect vehicle for Cronenberg: all of his films have contained some variation on the "mad scientist" theme, and it will be interesting to see what he'll do with the original. And Cronenberg seems to be the one director who is best equipped to bring the real meaning of *Frankenstein* to the modern screen.

*"Did I request thee, Maker, from my clay
To mould me man? Did I solicit thee
From darkness to promote me?"
—*Paradise Lost,* John Milton

Winston

Continued from Page 52

thing I've learned so far. He'll be the ultimate muppet. He should become a household word; he's really a wonderful character." *Howard the Duck* will be the first project on which Winston will share credit with his associate James Kagel.

Aside from his movie work, Winston is involved with a quite noble artistic endeavor, which is to develop, with Kagel, fantasy character sculptures with the intention that they become bronzes, and literally gallery art. "Our aim," explains Winston, "is to expose a new art form. No one has really seen really fine art sculptures in the fantasy media; only comic book art and illustration or painting."

The results of their labors are highly detailed, extremely expressive anatomical studies that each stand close to 50 centimeters in height. "A good deal of homework goes into everything we do," says Winston, "we study all the classical artists—Michelangelo, Rodin; as well as the current artists like Frazetta and Wrightson," to name a few.

Ultimately, they would like to exhibit their sculptures; but, so far, the fantasy gallery exhibit remains on the back burners at the Winston Studio, while Winston and his associate cook up more special make-up effects for film-goers like you and me to gobble up.

Friday the 13th

Continued from Page 8

13th's opening scene and the first scene of Carpenter's modern fright classic—both scenes are depictions of brutal murder from the killer's point of view. "Originally, we had planned to shoot that scene in quite a different way—it was written to occur by the lake on the campgrounds, there was to be a chase through a boathouse and by the water, and a few other things. The first night we had planned to shoot it, it snowed. The second time, our generator failed. So, we had to choose a location that had its own current source—which turned out to be the interior of a barn. Working on a limited budget, there wasn't much choice other than doing it that way. I'm hoping that people can take it as sort of a tip of the hat to Mr. Carpenter."

Whatever influences and inspirations are detectable in *Friday the 13th*, it is apparent that Paramount Studios agrees with Cunningham about the film's commercial potential—Paramount's decision-makers have decided to release the film nationwide, in over 700 theaters, this May, a distribution plan that requires a major investment in the production of film prints. Hopes are that 13 will be their—and Cunningham's—lucky number.

Savini Updated

By BOB MARTIN

Tom Savini needs no introduction to our regular readers—two years ago, around the same time that FANGORIA first hit the newsstands, Savini made his first indelible mark on the world of cinematic terror with his effects for *Dawn of the Dead*. Since then, we've watched him become the "true star" of a half-dozen independent terror features through his practice of the crimson effect, and gather critical raves as Morgan the Black Knight in *Knightriders*, his first starring role in a theatrical film.

As FANGORIA enters its third year of publication, Savini is about to embark on a new stage in his makeup career, devising numerous creatures (as well as casualties) for the George Romero-Stephen King film, *Creepshow*, which began its 13-week shooting schedule on July 27th in Pittsburgh

Despite a heavy preproduction schedule, Savini found the time to speak with us and bring our readers up to date on his latest activities, and some of the plans for the Romero film. Needless to say, we plan on speaking to him again when the Romero film is ready for release.

FANG: You must be very pleased with the critical reception of *Knightriders*—you were singled out for quite a bit of praise. How did you find working with Romero as an actor?

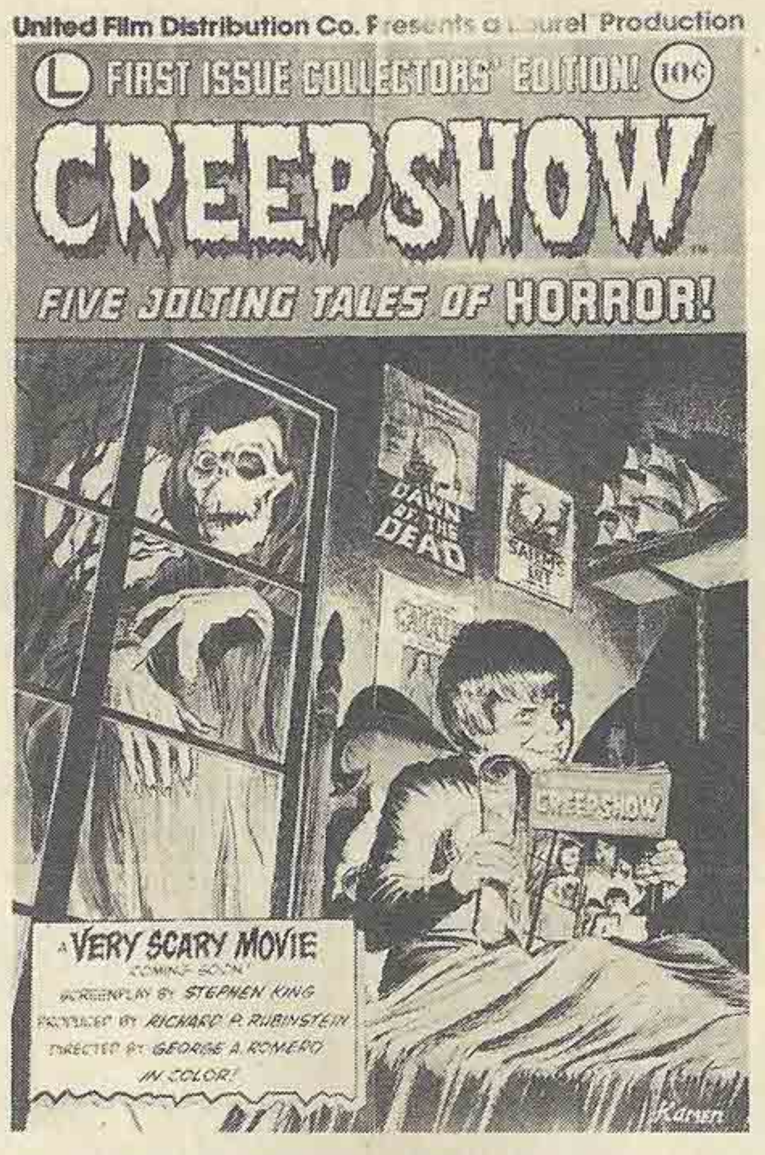
SAVINI: It's even better than working with him on effects. On *Dawn of the Dead*, George let me improvise a great deal on effects—we'd sit around sometimes, just trading ideas on new ways to kill people, and about a fourth of the effects in that film are things that were not in the script.

Acting for George is the same in a lot of ways. When I was studying acting at Carnegie-Mellon in Pittsburgh, they were very interested in training you to read the lines in the script as they were written. Sometimes there's trouble with that, because a given phrase or word isn't comfortable for you in that role. With George, of course it's very important that you communicate what is in the script and the storyline, but he loves for things to "happen" on the set. For instance, the scene where I was crowned was not in the script. I was just told that morning, "this afternoon we're going to shoot your crowning." Crowning? I had no idea what he was talking about. And then we improvised that entire scene, and it turned out to be very emotional—Richard Rubinstein was crying, and I was bawling like a baby.

FANG: Three movies have been released with your effects since then—*Eyes of a Stranger*, *The Burning* and *The Prowler*. How did *Eyes of a Stranger* come about?

SAVINI: Actually, the script for that originally had no murders on screen. It was done by the same production company as *Friday the 13th*, and when they saw *Friday* they decided they wanted the murders written into the script. So I went down there during the last couple weeks of shooting and killed a bunch of people.

FANG: Including a decapitation.



Savini's challenge: *Creepshow*.

SAVINI: They wanted a decapitation, and I had a head and shoulders from *Friday the 13th;* they shot that through an aquarium. Later, you see the head in the aquarium—that's actually the actor's head. He was a singer, into breathing exercises, and able to hold his breath for a good while; the rest of his body was actually in the bookcase under the tank. The books were really false spines, maybe a quarter-inch thick. His head was sealed water-tight into the bottom of the fishtank, surrounded by the gravel, little fishtoys and so on. He couldn't get out of there if he wanted to. One guy was on hand with scuba gear, so he could breathe while we filled the tank, we had a vacuum pump at hand in case we had to get him out in a hurry, and, just in case anything went seriously wrong, a guy was standing by with a hammer ready to break the glass.

FANG: You were approached to do *Friday the 13th: Part Two*, weren't you?

SAVINI: Yes, I was talking to them at the same time as I was talking to the people who were going to do *The Burning*. There were a couple of reasons why I wound up not doing it. One was, there seemed to be some miscommunication between the director, Steve Minor, and the people who were handling the money. I was told certain things, and then there were difficulties. *The Burning* people offered me full payment in advance, and they offered me a lot more.

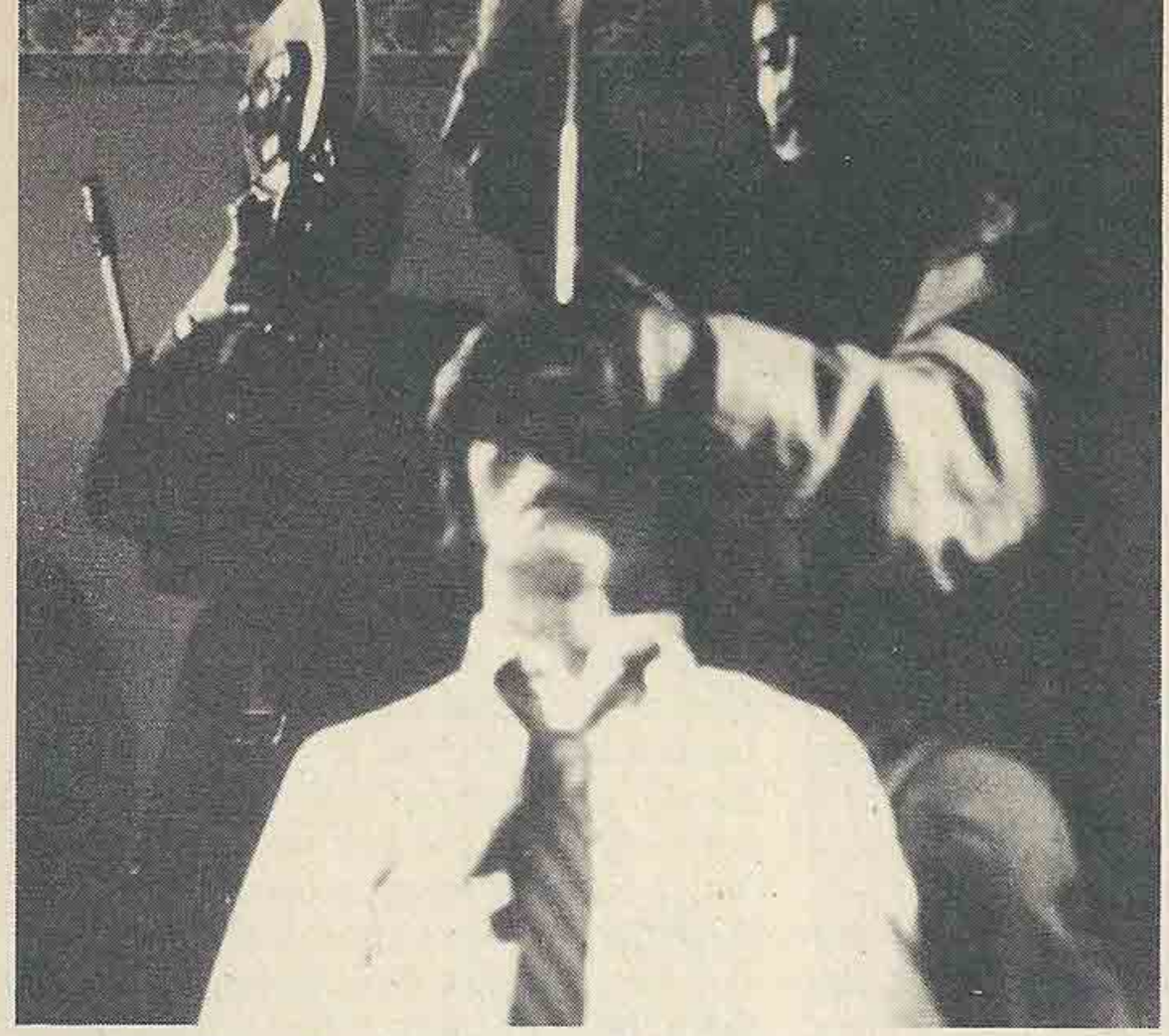
I also had some misgivings about the *F-2* script, especially the idea that Jason, who had only been alive in the girl's mind in the first one, should come back as a killer—too many ridiculous premises. Especially the idea that he was alive in some lake for all that time. So I decided to do *The Burning*, which was shot immediately after *Knightriders*, in Buffalo, New York.

FANG: A lot of people have noticed a similarity between those two films.

SAVINI: I know. But they say that the script for *The Burning* was submitted to Sean Cunningham long before *F-2*, and that they turned it down. That's why I stressed that they had to get *The Burning* in to release before *F-2*, if they wanted to avoid people thinking that they had stolen the plot. But they didn't.

FANG: We're going to be running some photos of a particularly gruesome burned hand you devised—what can you tell us about that photo in particular?

SAVINI: That guy is Alan Brawer, a musician, who worked with Rick Wakeman on the score—there's a scene where you only see the arm and he stood in for that one. It appears early in the picture, which concerns a prank played upon this mean caretaker by the kids at a summer camp. The prank goes wrong, and the guy really is burned badly. We cut to the hospital a week later, where a doctor tells an intern, "If you want to be a doctor, there's something I want you to take a look at—the worst thing I've ever seen." But before anybody gets a good look at him, this hand comes out and grabs the intern. It's sort of



For *The Prowler*, Savini applies a bayonet to a dummy stand-in.

Here, the real actor gets a fake bayonetting; Savini pumps the blood.

in Miami when it opened. Also, *Maniac* was a tease as to what the guy might look like—you don't see his face until the end.

FANG: I understand a lot of your work in that film is gone.

SAVINI: Yes, I heard from some people in Miami when it opened. also, *Maniac* was down there and nothing of mine was in it—none of it.

FANG: But *Maniac* is nothing without your stuff . . . .

SAVINI: People come up to me and say, I saw *Maniac*, what a wonderful film, and start reciting a list of effects they liked, none of which are in that version.

FANG: Speaking of *Maniac*, I've wanted to mention to you how interesting it was that every time it came to one of your effects sequences, the lighting would suddenly improve.

SAVINI: Uh-huh . . . you noticed that, huh? I think of effects as illusions, magic tricks. Sometimes you have to hide something in the shadows, or call attention to one thing while something else is going on, so I do think lighting is very important.

FANG: Getting back to recent events, how did you come to be involved in *The Prowler?*

SAVINI: Joe Zito, the director, was friendly with some of the people from *Maniac*. I met him at that time, and he was interested in my work for another movie, which never came through. Later, he came down to the *Knightriders* set to discuss *The Prowler* with me, and he again visited the set of *The Burning* to make sure I'd be available to do it. *The Burning* wound up going over schedule a bit; they'd already begun shooting *The Prowler*, in Cape May, New Jersey, when I joined them.

FANG: What is *The Prowler?*

SAVINI: There is a sequence in the beginning that takes place in the mid-1940s—a soldier coming back from the war who has received a "Dear John" letter from his girlfriend. He comes back to his home town, there's a dance, and his girl goes off to a car with this other guy, and he kills them with a pitchfork. Years later, in the same hall,they decide to have this annual dance again—but he guy is still around.

FANG: I heard from a friend at one of the distribution companies that screened it that it's a pretty good thriller.

SAVINI: It is one of the better films of those I've done—good characters, good effects, good acting.

FANG: The photos they sent show you with a bayonette poised over a dummy's head, and a similar shot with two actors.

SAVINI: In those pictures, I'm putting a real bayonette into a false head, then there's the false bayonette and the real actor. As we shot that sequence, you see the bayonette go into the top of the guy's head and come out under his chin, and then his eyes roll back—quite effective, if they're able to leave it in.

FANG: You've dispatched a lot of people with blades in the last two years . . . .

SAVINI: That's true. . . there's a guy doing a book called *The Splatter Movies*, and he's got a whole chapter on me.

FANG: And now you're going on to do your first "creature" makeups since Jason.

SAVINI: I do think of *Creepshow* as an opportunity to get away from splatter. I'm doing remote-control creatures; creatures with the sort of armatured structure that they had in the *King Kong* remake and in *Tanya's Island*. Rob Bottin has been a great help to me in constructing this stuff—we've had long conversations over the phone, discussing techniques and so on.

FANG: How many makeups, altogether, are being planned?

SAVINI: Oh . . . about 30, 31. That includes maybe six creatures, three of which will be actors in makeup or appliances—the rest will be achieved by other means. I've been working on this for about a month, and they're supposed to be ready by July 27th.

FANG: I don't suppose there's much you can say about the stories . . .

SAVINI: I can tell you that it's going to be just like an E.C. comic book—weird lighting that sometimes changes from frame to frame; harsh, contrasty things; special effect backgrounds that might shift a bit when the mood changes; yellow panels that describe a scene—they're really going for the comic book feel. There are five stories, all unpublished stories by Stephen King except for one, "The Crate," which appeared in a fantasy anthology. It started when George and Steve were up at King's house in Maine trying to put together a movie relentless enough to put everyone under their seats and crawling out of the theater.

FANG: Any chance that the film might be made for an R rating and a wider release than *Dawn?*

SAVINI: I don't know—in some ways, plans call for it to be more violent than *Dawn*, at lease in effect. *Dawn of the Dead* was sort of tongue-in-cheek. Romero has indicated that we have to be careful with how much blood, but I think that's a matter of what he wants for the film.

FANG: Since you've been talking to Bottin, and since there's been this wave of films featuring transformations—could there be a transformation sequence in the script?

SAVINI: No . . .

Actually, come to think of it, there is—Stephen King is going to play a part in this film, and he's going to transform into something. That's all I can say.

FANG: That's OK, Tom, that's all of our questions, for now.

Thanks a lot!

FINALLY AN EXPLANATION

Afterthoughts by the Editor

With close to three years of "Monsters, Aliens and Bizarre Creatures" behind me, I at last feel semi-qualified to give the definite answer to that burning question, "Why does FANGORIA print those disgusting pictures?"

Of course, I could devote my time to more fruitful endeavors. After all, has it yet been proven that neon light does not cause cancer? Or, for that matter, is there some way we can stack the evidence to make it appear that designer jeans do cause cancer? If Mr. Rose had been just a bit more patient in my 9th grade Biology class, I very well might have been out there, doing good for humanity with the best of them.

But Mr. Rose wasn't the paragon of patience that I needed to find my way through the complicated network of muscle, bone and flesh that is the human body. I was never even able to follow the instructions that came with my "Visible Man" plastic kit. Nevertheless, I was possessed by a profound curiosity concerning the innards of Mankind (and, after puberty, womankind as well). What outlet could I find for this raging thirst for knowledge?

To rephrase one of the more "respectable" film journalists and critics, I might say that I found it at the movies. When, at the age of

***Maniac* should only be seen on Times Square (if at all); Dr. Savini shows how to remove unsightly hair in this sequence.**

16, I emigrated to New York City with my family, I discovered Times Square—a biological learning laboratory beyond compare, lined with movie houses, each of them offering their own unique lessons in anatomy, week in and week out.

About half of these theaters were devoted entirely to the exterior female anatomy, a subject that I was reluctant to pursue because of a strict Catholic upbringing and a fear that Father Murphy would just happen to be walking down 42nd Street at the moment I emerged from the theater, blinded by the burst of daylight from the opening theater doors and unable to see him coming. Father Murphy swung a mean rosary. Instead, I made my field the internal anatomy of both male and female. It's been 15 years since I began my study, and I can now tell you that the average human body contains 4 to 6 quarts of blood, more if the FX man is really on the case.

So the answer to the question previously stated is quite simple and undeniable: It's educational.

Another burning question that people so often ask (they usually stop me on the street) is, "How do I know when I'm a FANGORIAN?" Actually there's a very simple test. Any Wednesday at 10 PM (Eastern time), turn on your television set and flip the dial until you find a television show named *Quincy*. Shortly, you will see Jack Klugman (the guy with the nose) say "Welcome to the fascinating world of forensic medicine,'(or something along those lines); he will then flip up a sheet, and a line of sturdy young rookie cops will faint, supposedly at the sight of what lay under Quincy's sheet.

The test is this—do you wish that you could see what was under that sheet? Maybe even a tiny little bit? If the answer is yes, congratulations.

You are a Fangorian!

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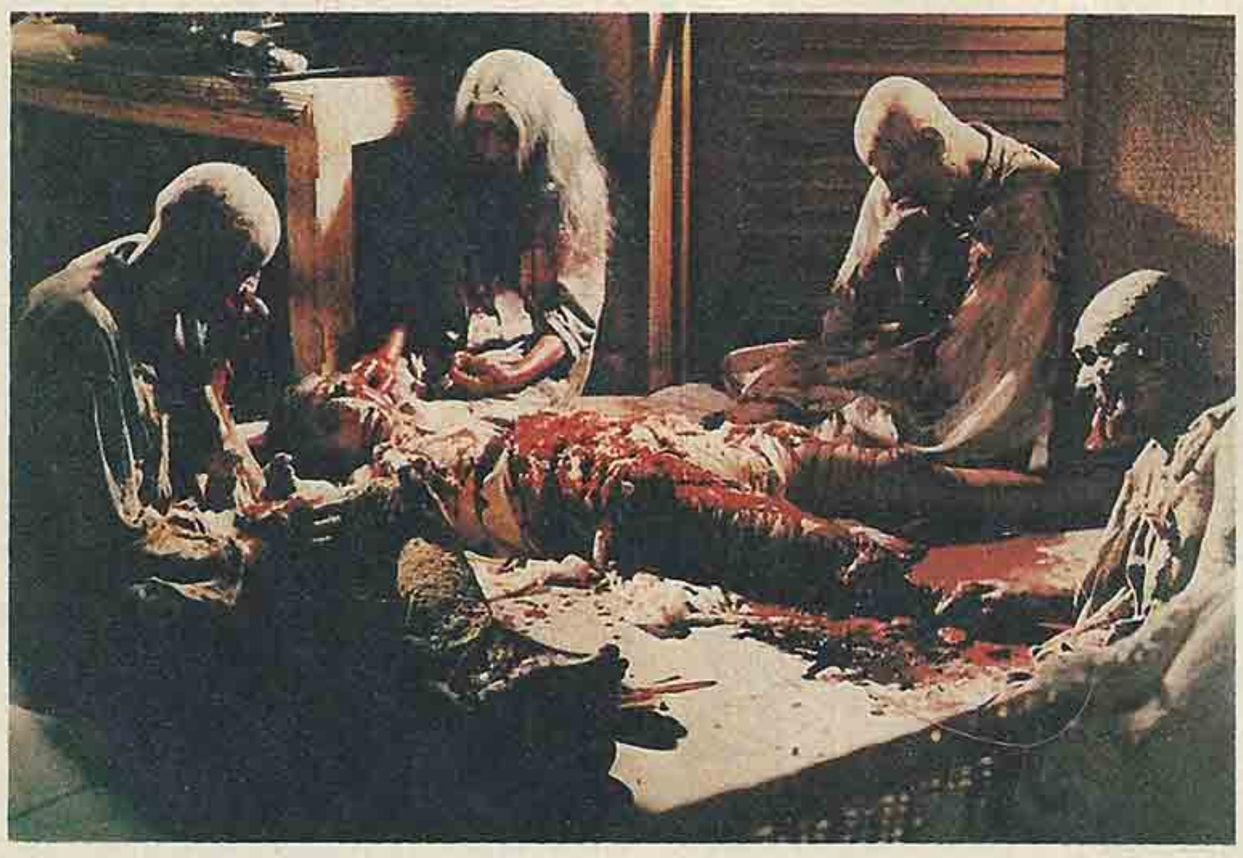

A combination autopsy and picnic, Italian style, in Luigi Fulci's *Zombie;* and David Cronenberg explores the miracle of childbirth in *The Brood*.

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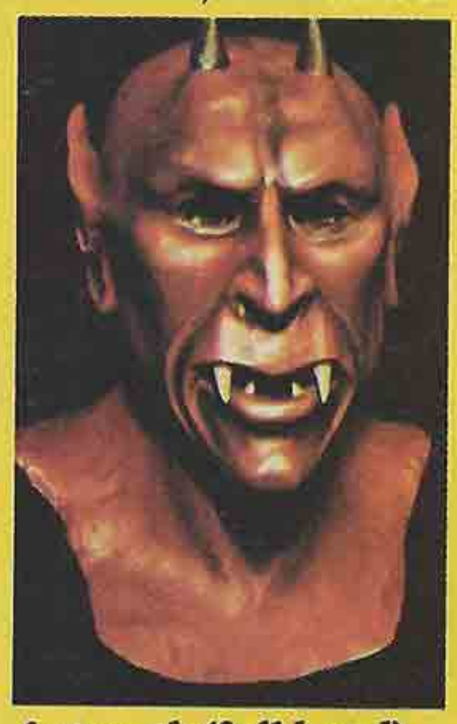


Astoroth (full head)

Warlock (half mask w/hair)

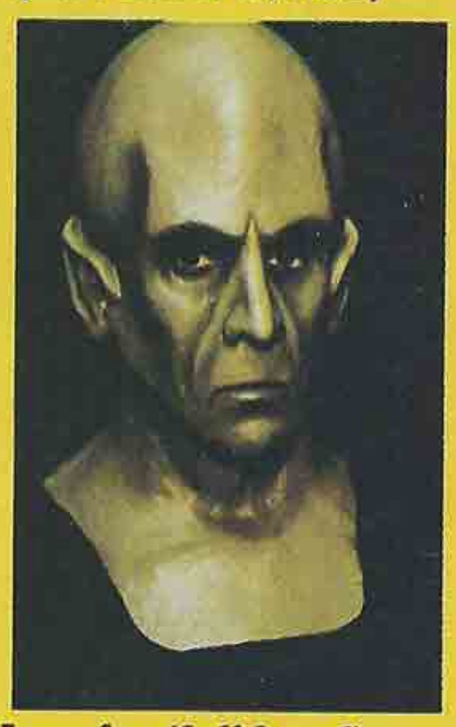
Demon Warrior (full head)

Toad Man (half mask w/hair)

Gargoyle (half mask w/hair)

Carnivore (full head)

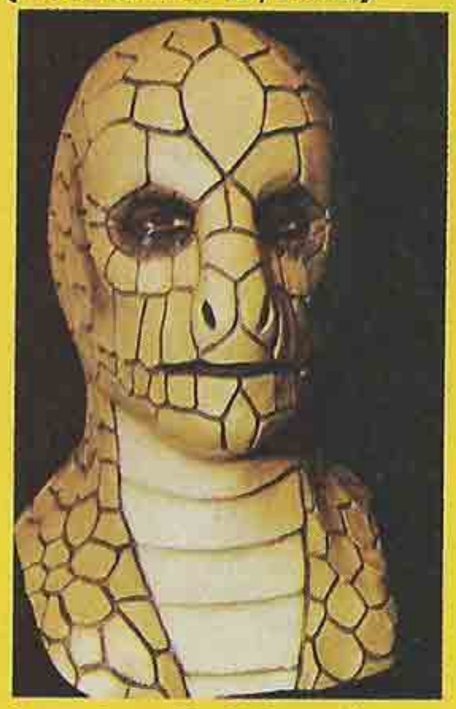
Bat Creature (half mask w/hair)



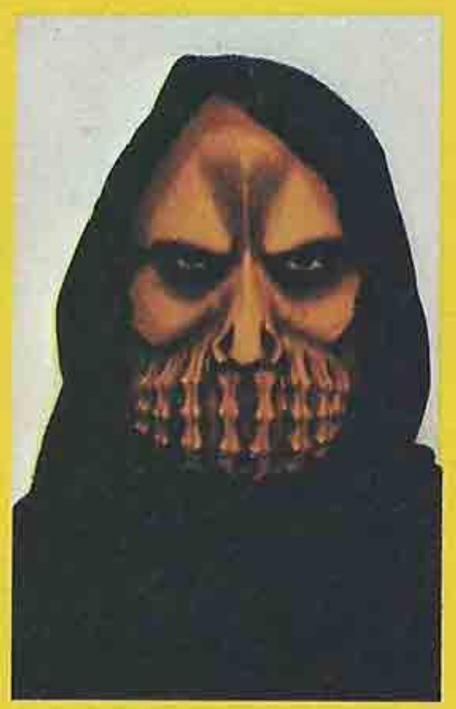
Invader (full head)

Entity (full head)

Rath (half mask w/hair)



Saurian (full head)



Hell Spawn (half mask w/hood)

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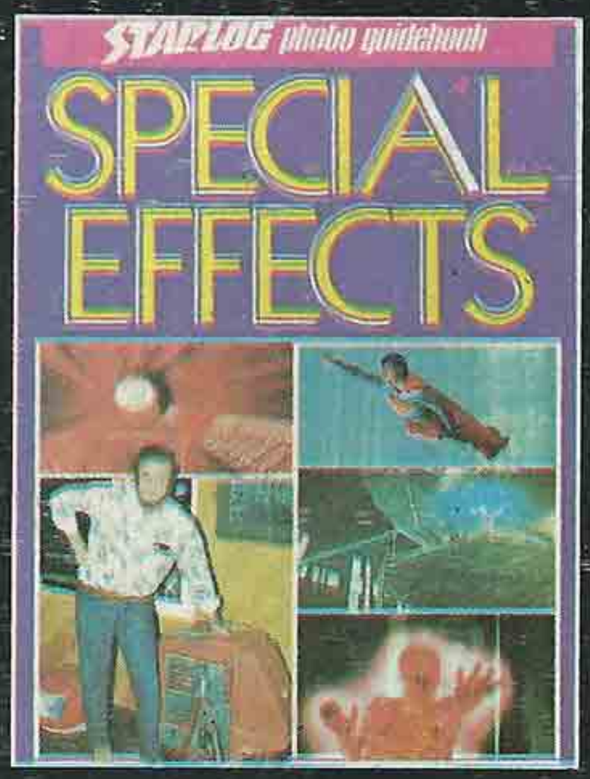

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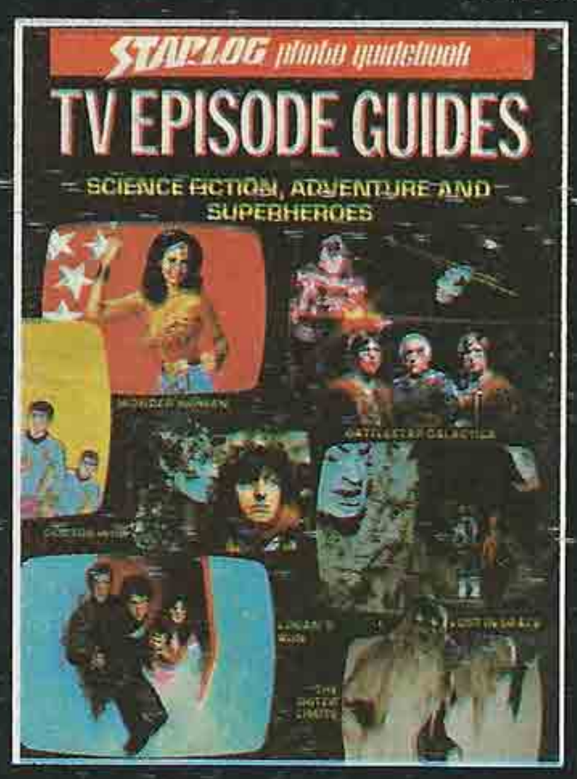

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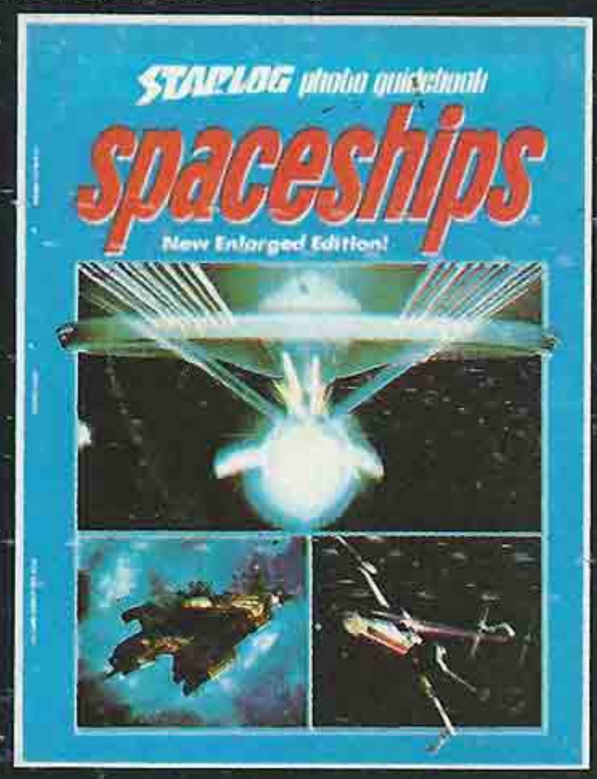

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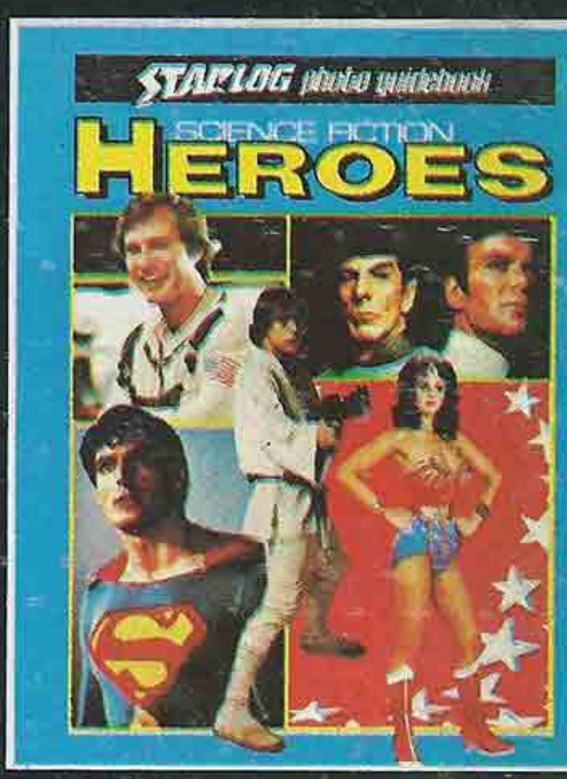

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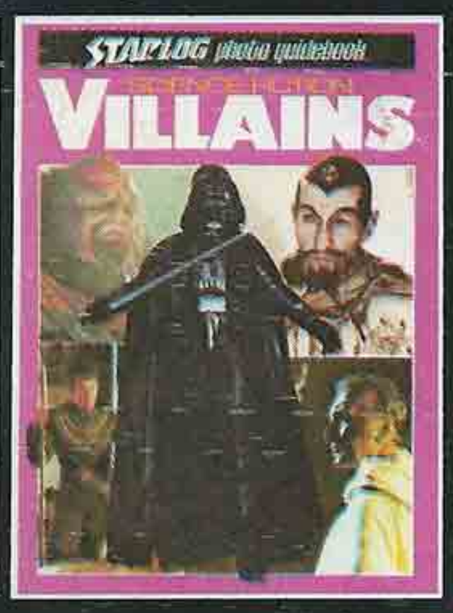

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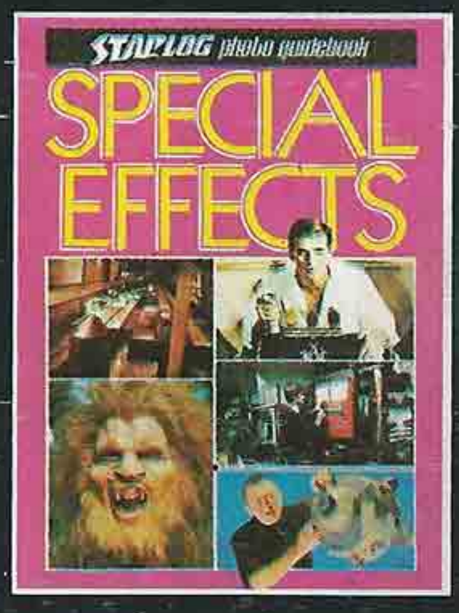

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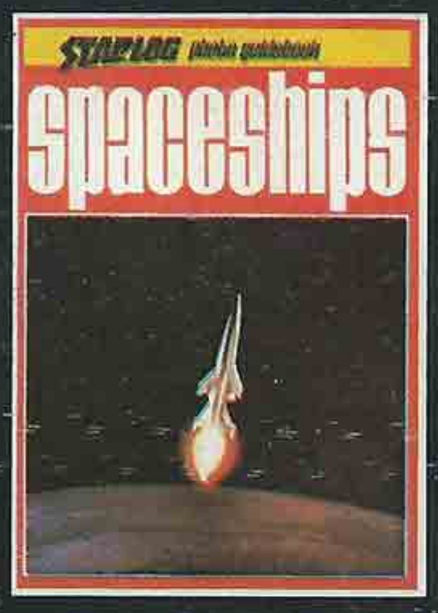

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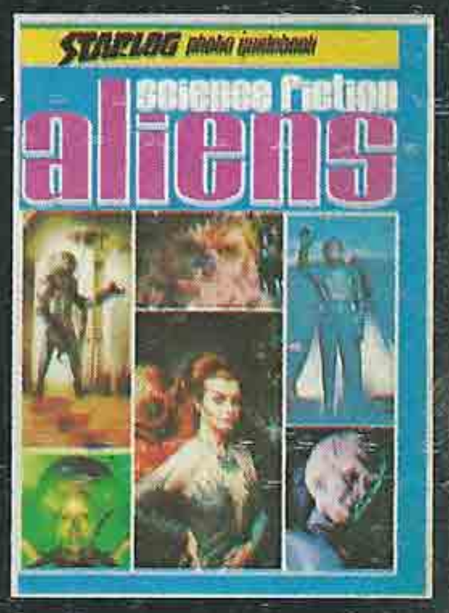

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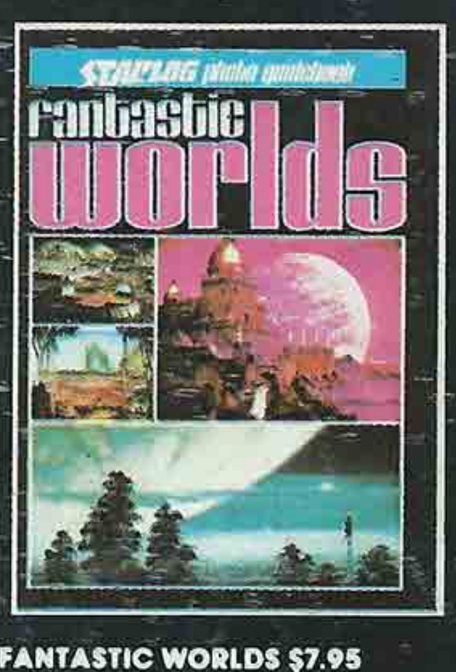

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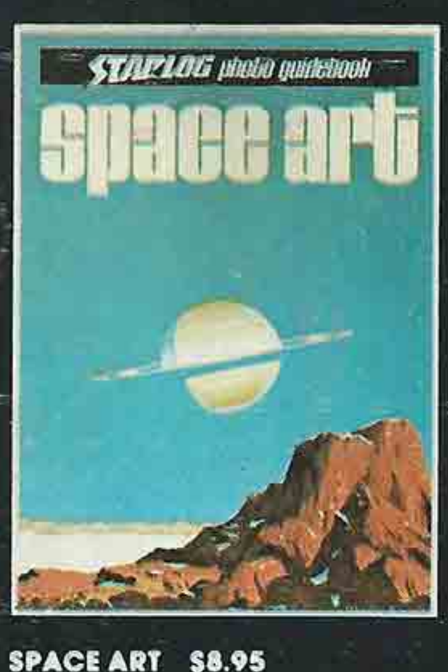

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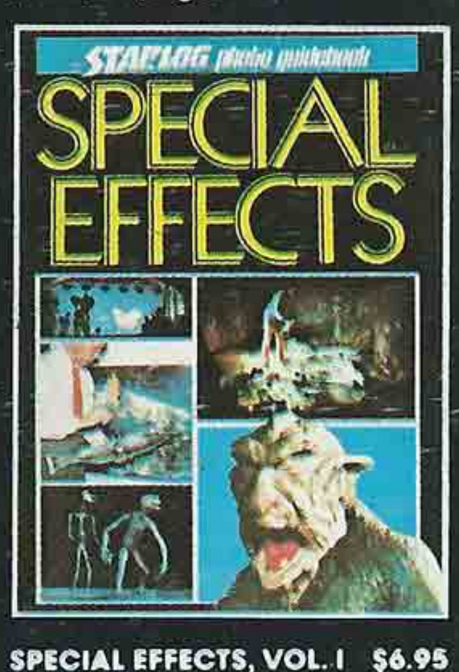

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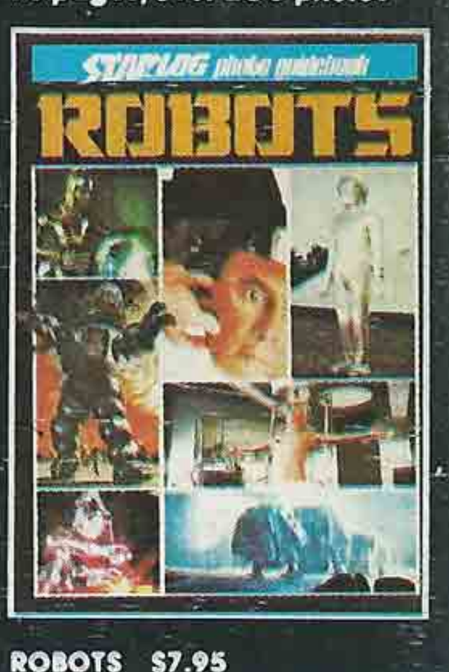

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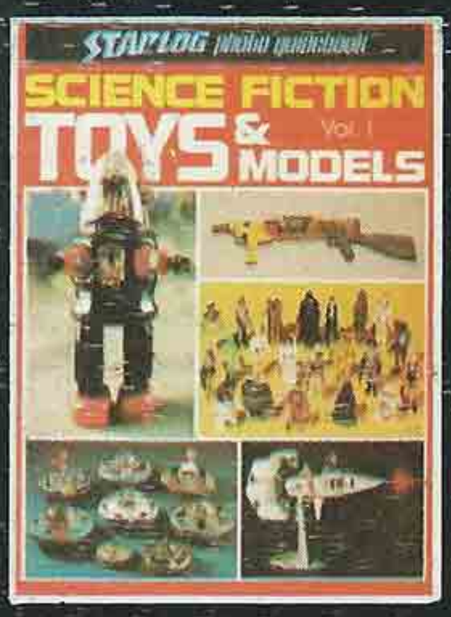

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